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THE PREGNANCY POLICE

'Fetal Rights': A New Assault On Feminism

KATHA POLLITT

Mothers are now seen as the major threat to unborn babies. (Page 409)

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EDITORIAL

GET THEE HENCE!

Hell is much in the news. From a jail cell in upstate New York, where he was serving time for antiabortion activities, Roman Catholic Bishop Austin Vaughan warned Governor Mario Cuomo that he was "in serious risk of going to hell" for supporting women's reproductive rights. The new Archbishop of Brooklyn promptly banned Cuomo from speaking about abortion in any church in his diocese, which also includes Cuomo's home borough of Queens.

Now New York's John Cardinal O'Connor, America's premier Catholic prelate, has told Sunday worshipers at St. Patrick's Cathedral that the Devil is afoot in one of his favorite haunts—rock music. Performers like Ozzy Osbourne (late of Black Sabbath) have so emboldened the Fiend that at least two possessed souls in the New York area required exorcism. O'Connor read passages from William Peter Blatty's *The Exorcist* to underscore his point.

It's all probably predictable as *fin-de-siècle* fantasy, except that O'Connor and an increasingly reactionary American Catholic hierarchy are deadly serious about the business of social and cultural repression. They've made a pact with the most illiberal elements in the land to beat Beelzebub at his own game and subvert freedom of human spirit and will.

Is this how the cold war ends, like the final scene of *Don Giovanni*? Bereft of secular devils and mundane evil empires, America may be homing in on the real thing. The Great Satan turns out to be—Satan.

COMMUNISM'S GREAT DEBATE
DANIEL SINGER

ART, MONEY AND WARHOL
PAUL MATTICK JR.

HETTIE JONES'S STORY
ALIX KATES SHULMAN

MONET
ARTHUR C. DANTO

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LETTERS.

CAMERA OBSCURA

Philadelphia

Kate Rouhana in "The Crucial Economic War Heats Up" [Jan. 1] asserts that Israel's response to Arab rioters "has grown more violent," with one result being that "more than 800 Palestinians have been killed so far."

Actually, about one-fourth of those 800 have been the victims not of violent Israelis but of Palestinian death squads. The killers claim to be executing what they call "collaborators," but in fact many of the targets were guilty of nothing more than failing to adhere to Muslim fundamentalist standards of morality, or paying their Israeli taxes on time, or were entangled in family feuds or underworld disputes.

The methods of execution have included hacking to death with meat cleavers and hanging from utility poles, and a pictorial album of the victims that was recently compiled by the Israeli Defense Ministry shows (in the words of *The Jerusalem Post*, which Rouhana herself cites as a source) "the decapitated heads of a number of victims, bodies burned beyond recognition, a pregnant woman whose stomach had been cut open, and others whose bodies had been smashed to a pulp or axed and cut to ribbons."

Those who profess concern for Palestinian human rights should consider the implications of this "intra*fada*" and ponder what sort of regime would be likely to govern a Palestinian state. *Bertram Korn Jr.*

Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (Camera)

ROUHANA REPLIES

Arlington, Mass.

I'm sorry to say that Bertram Korn of the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America is mistaken: The figure of 800 Palestinians who were slain since the uprising began refers to those who died at the hands of Israeli soldiers and settlers and Palestinian agents acting on the army's behalf. As of January 31, that number stood at 823. According to the Palestine Human Rights Campaign office in Chicago, the breakdown of these numbers is as follows:

Died from gunfire:	599
Beaten or burned:	55
Died from tear gas:	82
Direct responsibility of security forces:	736
Indirect responsibility of security forces (death under suspicious circumstances):	87
TOTAL	823

Of those killed by gunfire, five were killed by Palestinian agents, twenty-six by Israeli civilians, and the rest by the military.

The 128 Palestinians who were slain by other Palestinians is over and above the 800 figure. No one, not the Israeli Defense Force nor *The Jerusalem Post* and certainly not me, knows all the circumstances surrounding those deaths. Nor do we know enough about the widespread stories of a new army policy of execution on sight: Soldiers have reportedly been able to shoot wanted activists dead point-blank, thanks to tips from Palestinian collaborators. As in any military occupation, the stakes are dangerously high and the rules of the game are not nice.

It's regrettable that Camera, an organization well-known for its zealous commitment to an ultraright-wing Israeli version of "accuracy," did not see fit to address the core of my article, which was about the economic underside of the *intifada*. Korn simply zeroed in on one number, which he believed gave him an opening to cast moral aspersion on the Palestinians and question their right to statehood. It's an odd angle to take, given that I did not argue for or against Palestinian statehood in the article. But for the record, I'd like to note that if in the real world "intra" violence disqualified a people from statehood, America would be the first to be stripped of its sovereignty. *Kate Rouhana*

GAY SPIRIT

New York City

Jewell Handy Gresham makes an important point in her editorial inspired by Alvin Ailey's death and the celebration of his life held at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine last December 8 ["Dance of Life," Jan. 8/15]. Linking Ailey with James Baldwin, whose life was celebrated at the same cathedral precisely two years earlier, she notes there is no inherent contradiction between being a black artist and being an artist who addresses universal human themes. She also insists that African-Americans be free to savor and take pride in the fact that the genius and spirit demonstrated in the work of Baldwin and Ailey were rooted in their identities as African-Americans.

Ironically, however, in making those observations Gresham glosses over a second and equally important identity that these two artists shared: their sexual orientation. Just as it is important for African-Americans to claim a special connection with Ailey and Baldwin, it is equally important for gay Americans, and particularly gay African-Americans, to savor the gay roots of their artistic inspiration. Their lives, and Ailey's death, were infused with peculiarly gay experiences, not the least of which was distance from homophobic members of the community. Insistence on recognition and celebration of their gay identities is a particularly cogent demand, given the tendency of our culture to deny the complexity and scope of gay emotional life.

There is no inherent contradiction between being a black artist and being a gay artist. And, as Ailey and Baldwin both proved, gay African-American artists are capable of bearing witness for their times and for humanity in a voice that carries beyond their race and sexual orientation. It belittles the complexity of their art, and of their beings, to celebrate the African-American aspect of their genius while ignoring their gay spirits. *James E. Hough*

GRESHAM REPLIES

Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y.

To paraphrase someone, Coleridge perhaps, the ability to define requires the ability to make distinctions. I sense in James Hough's observations the political declaration African-Americans so frequently hear from various sides in America, that all forms of oppression are equal. It is a dangerous principle when facilely used to negate the historical struggle of black people, without distinctions, for very *survival* in a society still blatantly, and potentially fatally, racist.

But friend Hough may be saying nothing of the sort, in fact pointing out that each of us needs affirmation and reaffirmation of his/her personhood and spirit and that this vital need extends to sexual as well as racial identification.

How right he is. Yet he—and I—are trapped by the codifications imposed by others and the convoluted rationales and practices devised to undergird systems of oppression. We are also trapped by sex, gender, class and other categories. We, and the society, will most successfully make our way free to the extent that we can manage to rise above the traps sufficiently to analyze them.

Gordon Allport's classic discussion in *The Nature of Prejudice* of "primary" labels imposed by the society to codify people remains one of the most valuable. Blackness is America's primary qualifying label. As the norm, a gay person in America is a white male (and so, like all other whites, must make the choice of where he stands on race); a black gay male will be designated first and foremost by his blackness irrespective of his wishes. A woman is a white woman; a black woman will be classified first by race whether she is lesbian or straight.

For sanity's sake, I will spare us all by not singling out the predetermined fate of literally millions of black infants, children and youth—yesterday and today—because they are thus codified. But over the centuries, a people collectively develop physical, intellectual and spiritual reserves to help one another survive. At its best, there is a precious nobility and beauty reflected.

Ailey's genius lay—as Judith Jamison, his chosen successor, so repeatedly declares—in the fact that he specifically tapped his African-American roots for greatness. To illustrate: Has anyone noticed that there is a dramatic contrast between the recent television pictures of thronging masses in Eastern Europe and South Africa celebrating what hopefully

(*Continued on Page 432*)

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CONTENTS.

Volume 250, Number 12

LETTERS
402

EDITORIALS
401 Get Thee Hence!
403 One Tiny Step
404 On Eating Crow — *Larry Bensky*
405 Doubting Thomas — *Viveca Novak*

COLUMNS
406 Beat the Devil — *Alexander Cockburn*
408 Beltway Bandits — *David Corn*

ARTICLES
409 "Fetal Rights": A New Assault on Feminism — *Katha Pollitt*
418 Letter From Europe: Communism's Great Debate — *Daniel Singer*

BOOKS & THE ARTS
423 Bourdon: Warhol
Garrels, ed.: The Work of Andy Warhol
Warhol: The Andy Warhol Diaries — *Paul Mattick Jr.*
425 Jones: How I Became Hettie Jones — *Alix Kates Shulman*
426 Life on the Mississippi Queen (poem) — *Philip Appleman*
427 Past Present — *Thomas Mallon*
428 Art — *Arthur C. Danto*

Illustrations by Monica Incisa

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EDITORIALS.

One Tiny Step

Last spring, when Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir presented his plan for elections in the West Bank and Gaza to select Palestinian representatives to negotiate with Israel, some critics of Israeli hard-liners welcomed his initiative while others denounced it as a delaying tactic buying time to crush the *intifada.* The *intifada* was not crushed, the talk of elections drowned out discussion of an international peace conference, and the Bush Administration embarked on what many, including no doubt Shamir, assumed would be the impossible task of convincing the Palestinians to accept Israel's conditions. A year passed; another $3 billion in military and economic aid flowed to Israel, and another 315 Palestinians and twelve Israelis died while the diplomats bickered.

Now, thanks to the Palestine Liberation Organization's flexibility, Egypt's mediation, Washington's subtle pressure and the Israeli Labor Party's desire to move forward, Shamir's bluff has been called. A compromise acceptable to the P.L.O. has been reached on the way to open talks in Cairo about implementing Shamir's election plan. Although it is just a baby step, harder-liners in Shamir's party, fearing it will lead toward a historic compromise, are in revolt. Confident of American support, the Labor Party seems to have found some backbone and at this writing is preparing to leave the ruling coalition if Shamir refuses to endorse the compromise.

President Bush and Secretary of State Baker deserve praise

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for their recent statements opposing further growth of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories and reminding Israel that even East Jerusalem will be subject to negotiation. But if their show of resolve is to have any lasting effect, they will have to stop evading some hard questions.

First, how long will the United States continue to pretend that the P.L.O. is not involved in the peace process? In the interest of getting talks started all the parties have colluded in the fiction that the P.L.O. will not direct the Palestinian delegation. But it is essential that the P.L.O. be included if any settlement is to be permanent. Second, how long will the United States continue to fund policies that, in addition to denying Palestinians their rights, could ultimately lead to Israel's demise? Ever since Senator Robert Dole floated a proposal for an across-the-board reallocation of foreign aid, the prospect of cutting Israel's share has hovered over Washington. If Shamir (or his farther-right-wing rivals) succeeds in scuttling the Cairo talks, continuation of present aid levels can only embolden the Israeli hard-liners. Bush and Baker would prefer to make progress without including the P.L.O. or sanctioning Israel. But they can't have it both ways.

On Eating Crow

Reporters who cover electoral politics, if they are of a certain age (and this one just barely is), carry in their mind a certain photograph. It shows Harry Truman with a huge smile, holding up an early edition of the post-Election Day 1948 *Chicago Tribune* with its banner headline, "Dewey Defeats Truman."

In the unlikely event that Violeta Barrios de Chamorro is a *Nation* reader, she might care to pose with recent issues of this publication, with just as broad a smile, after reading my March 5 article, "Campaigning With the Sandinistas," and my colleague Tony Jenkins's piece, "The Unmaking of Doña Violeta," in the February 26 issue.

"The government is almost sure to be re-elected," I wrote; the Sandinistas "couldn't lose." This, from the perspective of one who, in early February, had spent less than three weeks in the country, but over fifteen years studying Nicaragua and *Sandinismo*.

My beliefs stemmed, first of all, from the "reliable" voter preference polls, backed up by attitude surveys, which showed that the Sandinistas had a seemingly unbreakable bedrock of support; the clientelism that I wrote about reinforced this.

Second, on my third day in Nicaragua, I had the misfortune to attend a Sandinista rally of about 2,500 people in a town whose adult population was barely larger than that. Since the press buses broke down, I was able to talk to quite a few people there; even those less than enthusiastic about the Sandinistas were unable to name even UNO's local candidates and expressed no support for them. Those who liked the Sandinistas categorically informed me that the country was full of regions like theirs, where people had been given land, health clinics, schools and roads by *Sandinismo*.

Third, UNO's representatives were a bickering, inarticulate lot; Violeta was a mess; their campaign was invisible, except at their disorganized, poorly attended (in comparison with the Sandinistas') rallies; in seven weeks of interviews, no UNO supporter ever expressed enthusiasm about an UNO candidate, or seemed to know anything about UNO's platform. And seemingly everywhere, Sandinista regalia adorned the walls of the country and the bodies of its inhabitants.

As it turns out, all my perceptions were true; and all were irrelevant to the outcome of the election. The Sandinistas did have a large bedrock of support; they just didn't add to it. In fact, their expensive, inappropriately triumphalist campaign probably subtracted from their vote.

The town where I attended the rally, San Francisco Libre, voted 2 to 1 for the Sandinistas. But elsewhere—and even there—people voted against them despite the fact that their centuries-long struggle for land had been rewarded by the Sandinistas. The reason? Land without seed, fertilizer and reliable markets—which the Sandinistas have had trouble supplying—is worse than useless. I hadn't stayed long enough that day to find that out; weeks later, when I began to be told about it often enough to sense a pattern, it was easy to underestimate its impact. And my "Dewey Defeats Truman" article had already gone to print.

UNO's bickering, ineffectual campaign didn't matter. People voted against the Sandinistas, not for UNO. Violeta Chamorro might have been a goat in a gorilla suit; she would have won anyway. People *did* wear Sandinista trappings everywhere, and UNO caps and shirts almost never. This meant nothing other than that peer pressure was for the glitzy incumbent regalia, and that a gift T-shirt worth a dollar or two is of greater value to a Nicaraguan earning $12 a month selling fruit on the streets (or $18 a month as a schoolteacher) than even a poorly paid community radio correspondent could imagine.

Another element that we pundits, almost all of us, were ill-equipped to weigh was the peace issue. Sure, we knew that 65,000 dead in the wars against Somoza and the *contras* is an enormous toll for a country with 3.7 million citizens (the equivalent of 4.4 million casualties in the United States). And it's just about impossible to find a Nicaraguan family that hasn't lost someone in the war—dead, wounded, kidnapped or exiled.

But what was harder to fathom was the Nicaraguan variation on the simple reasoning of voters in wartime: If these guys are for peace, why have we had endless war? The corollary in Nicaragua was: If peace is so near, why don't the Sandinistas abolish compulsory military service *now*?

In the end, I'm sure, many of us wanted to be fooled by the Sandinistas' powerfully expressed vows of defiant nationalism, internationalism and a better future. UNO's free-market recipes, and their potential enforcement by C.I.A.-trained *contras* turned into death squads, were (and are) too hideous an alternative to the hemisphere's most energetically progressive movement. So we put on Sandinista paraphernalia (some of us literally) with which to view the campaign. It was a matter of privilege as much as anything else; we could lose our T-shirts without losing the shirt off our backs. And when we went home from the enormous final rally in Managua

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(there were almost as many people there as Ortega got votes in the whole country), it wasn't in an inhumanly crowded bus, to an empty plate. LARRY BENSKY

Larry Bensky is national affairs correspondent for Pacifica Radio.

Doubting Thomas

Recent confirmation hearings on Clarence Thomas's nomination to the U.S. Court of Appeals were surprisingly gentle. For one thing, most senators made few inquiries about the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's questionable handling of age discrimination cases during his eight years as its chairman.

Age discrimination cases make up roughly a quarter of the E.E.O.C.'s caseload these days. That's partly because the work force is generally older and partly because employers know that, unlike discrimination on the basis of race or sex, it pays to get rid of older workers. Many older people are at the high end of the wage scale, have earned more vacation time and have greater health insurance needs, so businesses have an economic incentive to push them out.

Unlike other antidiscrimination laws, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act imposes a two-year statute of limitations on claims. It also forbids recourse to a private attorney once the E.E.O.C. has filed a complaint. Thus, older workers, even more than other victims of workplace discrimination, depend on the commission to do its job in a timely and effective way. But a Congressional investigation two years ago found that the E.E.O.C. had allowed the statute of limitations to expire in over 13,000 age discrimination claims. More than 1,500 claims have been allowed to lapse since April 1988 according to the E.E.O.C. itself.

Perhaps worse is the commission's behavior in an important case involving severance pay. In the 1970s and 1980s the Westinghouse Electric Corporation shut down or cut back at a number of plants. As the company slashed its payroll, it steadily expanded the class of people eligible for early retirement. The problem was that any worker who chose early retirement could not collect severance pay, and to opt for retirement meant forfeiting the right to be recalled to work. The scheme looked like an effort to force older workers out.

For years the E.E.O.C. aggressively pursued the Westinghouse case. Federal District Court Judge Marvin Katz decided against the company in 1986, citing what he called the "human wreckage of older Westinghouse employees," ruling that Westinghouse had made nonretirement status a condition for receiving severance pay, thus discriminating against laid-off workers on the basis of age. There was no cost-based justification for that policy, since severance pay cost the same for everybody, unlike, say, health insurance – otherwise Westinghouse might be able to claim that this was a benefit expressly exempt from the age statute. The decision was upheld on appeal, and Westinghouse petitioned the Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, last spring the Supreme Court issued a landmark ruling in a case not involving the E.E.O.C., *Public Employees Retirement System of Ohio v. June M. Betts.* The Court struck down the age statute's exception allowing discrimination in older workers' benefit plans for reasons of cost – no showing of higher cost is required, it said. In light of *Betts*, the Supreme Court sent *Westinghouse* back to the appeals court for a new judgment.

The E.E.O.C.'s reaction was telling. *Betts*, some commission lawyers argued, blew apart pending severance pay cases, including *Westinghouse*, and the E.E.O.C. should seek their dismissal. A list was drafted of cases to give up, supported by the general counsel. Other staff attorneys, shocked at the proposed desertion of the commission's clients, offered reasons for saving the cases.

A lawyer who handled the Westinghouse case for years was taken off the case after she presented arguments for continuing to fight. The next attorney was forbidden to make the best argument and one that *Betts* had left wide open: that severance payments were never meant to be treated as the kind of benefit exempt from the law's requirements, and thus to treat older workers differently in that regard is illegal. Then, for the January 16 oral argument in the Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, the commission assigned Vella Fink, an attorney known to sympathize with Westinghouse's position. She conceded away one of the remaining arguments in the commission's own brief.

The Westinghouse case, which will affect 7,000 or more workers, could still be salvaged. But an unknown number of other pending severance pay cases were simply dismissed at the E.E.O.C.'s request after *Betts*. The commission's disingenuousness on this was clear last September at Senate hearings on pending legislation to nullify the impact of *Betts*. General Counsel Charles Shanor found it regrettable that a lower court had dismissed a case similar to *Westinghouse*, but he did not tell the panel that it was dismissed at the commission's request. "This is an instance where if this was a private action, the workers might yell malpractice," says American Association of Retired Persons counsel Cathy Ventrell-Monsees of the E.E.O.C.'s treatment of age discrimination cases.

What role has Thomas played in all this? Directly, perhaps a small one, but he was supposed to be minding the store. Senators who didn't block Thomas's ascension to the bench on March 6 say they might act differently if he gets a Supreme Court nomination, as it is rumored he could if there's a vacancy soon. Evan Kemp, another commissioner appointed by Reagan, has been nominated to head the agency; his views on age cases aren't well known. A.A.R.P. and other groups are hoping for a win in *Westinghouse*, in part to send a signal to Congress. A bill that would overturn *Betts*, now moving through the Senate, may force the E.E.O.C. to act as an advocate for older workers who are victims of discrimination. Although the agency is asking for a large budget increase this year, there is no indication that its priorities will change without outside prodding.

VIVECA NOVAK

Viveca Novak is senior writer at Common Cause Magazine.

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

The Bright Side of Life

Like so many others, I read the pre-election polls from Nicaragua and took heart. I'd always marveled that the Sandinistas had not faced more public commotion, particularly after the hurricane. How long can you retain the faith of people who have faced a 90 percent drop in purchasing power, a decade of war, scarcity at every level of material life?

But in the end something has to give, and it finally did on February 25. The victory was not for democracy but for violence, administered by the United States via *contras*, trade embargo and blocking of multilateral credits.

I woke before dawn the day after the vote and had the chill feeling, even before I went outside to pick up the *Los Angeles Times*, that the news would not be good, which it certainly wasn't. I tried to cheer myself up and thought of my father. How had the world looked to him the day the Spanish Republic fell, in 1939? Bleak.

I went back to reading the paper; gobs of offal prose from Elliott Abrams, forming by reflected light an image subsequently focused by cornea, aqueous humor, crystalline lens, vitreous humor and retina, thence passed into the occipital area of the brain for analysis and subsequent storage next to reveries of childhood, old recipes and some lines from Empson's poem "Missing Dates": "Slowly the poison the whole blood stream fills/di dum di dum/the waste remains, the waste remains and kills."

The bright side: This isn't Chile. The enemy has not got, nor in the near to medium future will it have, a monopoly on violence. Even if some draftees are already heading back to barrio or farm, the Sandinista Army is not going to demobilize. The Frente did arm the people.

The dark side: As they are recognizing now, the Sandinistas had somewhat lost touch with the above-mentioned people. They should have had a better sense of what was going to happen on election day.

The bright side: They may have lost touch a bit, but they didn't murder, torture, loot, betray their fellow citizens. They remain the most formidable political force in Nicaragua.

The dark side: The possibility of a U.S. invasion should not be discounted. The United States does not like standing armies led by men not trained at Fort Benning and Eglin Air Force Base.

The bright side: Ortega and the Sandinistas may have lost an election fought under impossible conditions, but at the procedural level the election was among the most honest ever held in the Americas. Today, Ortega is even being praised by Dan Quayle. Just as Michael Manley lived out the Seaga years, finally to return to power in Jamaica, so too could Ortega return to the presidency in six years, the economy having been revived by the lifting of the embargo, the end of the war, maybe even reparations.

The dark side: Ask Michael Manley what he learned in his first tour as Prime Minister. Answer: don't fuck with U.S. imperialism. There's only one nation in the Americas still fucking with U.S. imperialism, and Dan Quayle isn't likely to be saying anything nice about its leader.

Muck and Pus

I finished reading the muck by Elliott Abrams ("our active intervention *is* appreciated"). Later that day a friend read me some bits from *The Boston Globe*'s lead editorial, a midden of semiliterate ravings by the *Globe*'s editorial page editor, Martin Nolan:

> Ortega's defenders in the US, if they love Nicaraguans and not just Sandinistas, must now rally to Chamorro. . . . The Sandinista revolution, still potent as an opposition force, is now, like so many Marxist-Leninist phenomena, consigned to the dustbin of history. Another blessing of democracy is that outside theories mean little. At long last, Nicaragua itself has spoken.

Once upon a time the *Globe* had a relatively respectable editorial tone. What's pushing Nolan to write this vulgar, stupid prose? The same force that pushed Flora Lewis, in *The New York Times* for March 3, to insult the young internationalists who have been working in Nicaragua over the past decade: "revolutionary groupies . . . leather sandals . . . defiant rejection of grooming"; qualities contrasting with those of her Topsider-shod son, the pipsqueak Gruson. Nolan, Lewis and the rest of the hacks now at levels of seniority within corporate journalism share at least one thing—they hate the sixties and anything surviving from the spirit of that reforming decade. This hate, suppurating through their sentences, is like pus in their souls.

What the Solidarity Movement Missed

Friends back from Nicaragua tell me that the day after the election most places were quiet, almost eerily so. There was hardly anything in the way of UNO victory rallies. The place was subdued, as though people who thought they had voted with their heads were suddenly feeling the heaviness in their hearts. Here too in El Norte there was true melancholy, and it took a while before people pulled themselves together and went out shopping for silver linings. A whole generation came to political maturity with the revolution in Nicaragua and efforts to defend that revolution as a focal point in their political and, often, personal lives.

The bright side: The solidarity movement in the United States had its successes. The Reagan Administration came to power in 1981 and almost instantly promulgated a white paper that looked like a preamble to invasion. By 1985 the solidarity movement, through diligent grass-roots organizing, education and coalition building, had played a major role in forcing the Reagan gang underground, into clandestine, illegal activities, which in turn led to the Iran/*contra* scandal which pre-empted the invasion that in my view was being planned for early 1987.

The dark side: The movement was never able to install "End the embargo" as a central and persistent demand, but it was the trade embargo that helped bleed Nicaragua dry. UNO's economist Francisco Mayorga told *The Miami Herald* on February 21 that he reckoned the cumulative impact of the embargo at a $3 billion loss for Nicaragua, a huge

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sum for a poor country. The small business sector was particularly hard hit by the cutoff of supplies. Right before the election Secretary of State James Baker announced that a Sandinista victory would insure that the embargo would stay in place.

This embargo was imposed by Reagan in 1985 with an executive order premised on the claim that Nicaragua was a threat to U.S. national security. It has been renewed each year since on the same claim. The World Court declared the embargo illegal in its decision of June 27, 1986, confirming the illegality of the bombing of the harbors and the U.S. funding and support for the *contras*. On December 4, 1989, by a vote of 78 to 2, with 32 abstentions, the U.N. Second Committee deplored the embargo and requested that it be revoked. On December 22 the General Assembly adopted the same resolution by a vote of 82 to 2, with 47 abstentions. The negative votes were cast by the United States and Israel. There was no coverage of either vote in *The New York Times* and, I'm afraid, no successful attempt by the solidarity movement to try to make political use of the U.N. debates. This was a terrible failure. Lesson (for me as much as for you): always watch for what no one is talking about; chances are it's something important.

If you want to trace the point at which vital momentum was lost, go back to the fight over "nonlethal" aid after military aid to the *contras* had supposedly been terminated. Enough liberal Democrats were able to argue that some measure of aid was essential to "hold" the center, and the famous "bipartisan accord" was hatched. The Democrats were then able to argue that the *contra* war was effectively over; the press complied; no one talked about the embargo; and a broad section of the left decided that the battle was won and we could look elsewhere, to El Salvador. Go back and read *The Nation*'s editorial of April 17, 1989:

> The accord is probably the best that we can hope for from a Bush Administration. . . . And if the money allows them [the *contras*] to spend the next eight months in camp doing push-ups and playing softball while the United States figures out how to dispose of them in the longer term—well, better that than having them run around Honduras raping, pillaging and dealing crack.

The bright side: The solidarity movement was broad, involving thousands of people new to political action.

The dark side: The very breadth of the movement did inculcate a certain political timidity, a somewhat pollyannaish (and this is in no way intended as disrespect for Pollyanna as a person) attitude to solidarity work, as though supporting a revolution would never demand harder commitments than sending supplies to health clinics. The distinction between the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran solidarity movements has always been marked in this respect.

As for the timidity . . . Teri Brown, an activist in Charlottesville, Virginia, reports that at a talk on March 3 given by Bill Lankford of Veterans for Peace, who had been in Nicaragua for the elections, an F.S.L.N. flag was on display—a little late. Six months ago there were no flags at such events. In Teri's view, "We should have come out strongly in the support of the F.S.L.N. People around me are terrified because I have a black and red banner on my door." On another occasion she made a sign reading "Victory to the Sandinistas" for a visit George Bush made to the university campus. A member of the Latin American organization she works with hid that same sign when church people came to the group's office one day.

The Next Stage of the Journey

What now for the solidarity movement? The Sandinistas did build institutions—schools, clinics, newspapers, rural engineering works. Many North Americans were involved in those. Now there will be attempts to strangle such projects, and often they will depend on financial aid and organizational backup from the North. Lankford is returning to help protect a solar energy operation he's been working on.

Human rights work will be increasingly important. Nicaragua was a place where refugees from dungeons across the Americas could live in relative safety, and such sanctuary is no longer assured. Progressive unions are going to be doing a lot more work with Nicaraguan labor, raising funds, arranging tours, monitoring worker and human rights.

Dennis Marker of Witness for Peace, which is discussing future strategies, wants to use "the standard set by Nicaragua and hold the U.S. to the same standards for the rest of the region." There are presidential elections coming up in Guatemala in November and municipal elections in El Salvador next spring. "We should use the theme of true democracy, pluralism, freedom of speech—things the right have used against us—and turn the U.S.'s arguments against them."

There's a trap here, though: the trap of the "demonstration election" flaunting merely procedural democracy. Are we now to be persuaded that 3,000 outside observers plus Jimmy Carter can make the butcher oligarchy of El Salvador into a "level playing field"? Are the U.S. elections genuine exercises in democracy? In El Salvador, where the F.M.L.N. is being very conciliatory about the Nicaraguan elections for obvious reasons, we could see the passage from slaughter to elections, without negotiations or concessions to the left and with Cristiani getting much liberal benediction for matching Ortega's "apparently genuine, though belated, understanding of what democracy means——" Fill in the rest yourself. Any Congressional urge to cut funding to Cristiani would thus be halted, amid pleas to "help the democratic process toward consummation in 1991."

These days people seem mesmerized by claptrap. Why not try an antidote, like the Washington demonstration and civil disobedience action against the U.S. war in El Salvador, taking place on March 24. For details call the coalition for the Archbishop Romero March and Commemoration at (202) 483-3911. If you disagree with Vaclav Havel that we should "see the world in bipolar terms as two enormous forces—one a defender of freedom, the other a source of nightmares," be there.

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BELTWAY BANDITS.

DAVID CORN

■ Sex

It would make a good campaign promise: safer and better sex. Members of Congress now have the chance to tell their constituents that they are foursquare behind such a policy. Last year Representatives Pat Schroeder and Olympia Snowe introduced legislation to establish three centers to research new forms of birth control, and two centers to explore treatments for infertility, at a cost of $77.2 million over five years. The need for this was made clear by a recent National Academy of Sciences report which noted that research on contraceptives has all but vanished in the United States. Prior to the 1980s seventeen major U.S. companies were engaged in contraceptive development; now only one is. And there's plenty to research: a disposable diaphragm, stronger condoms and a chemical contraceptive for men (not surprisingly the furthest of these from development). Also on the agenda should be an inquiry into why the cervical cap—in wide use in Europe—is not yet generally available in this country.

The Schroeder-Snowe initiative is also being offered in the Senate, with the backing of antiabortion stalwart Mark Hatfield. Schroeder is pushing the bill as a bridge between abortion rights advocates and antiabortion activists. But the antichoice movement is wary of "birth control," a term it applies to devices and drugs that go to work after fertilization and thus are "antilife." In fact, at Hatfield's request, the Senate version of the bill replaces "birth control" with "contraception," which some argue means only the prevention of fertilization. This sleight of hand has not persuaded the National Right to Life Committee, which opposes the bill in either incarnation. So far Schroeder seems to be building a one-way bridge.

■ Drugs

What do you do if you're an international bank guilty of money laundering? Hire lobbyists. Nine days after two affiliates of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International pleaded guilty in January to violating banking laws and agreed to pay $14.8 million in penalties, the banks retained two high-powered law firms to lobby Congress: Laxalt, Washington, Perito and Dubuc (where E. Lawrence Barcella, the former Assistant United States Attorney who successfully prosecuted C.I.A. renegade Edwin Wilson, will handle this account); and Arent, Fox, Kintner, Plotkin and Kahn, one of the firms that represented the B.C.C.I. affiliates in court.

The bank, charged with helping the Medellín cartel wash more than $14 million in drug profits, has good reason to fret about the Hill. Several members of Congress, including Senators John Kerry and Howard Metzenbaum, attacked the plea arrangement negotiated by the Justice Department for being too light, and there has been talk of legislation that would stiffen penalties against drug bankers. The $14.8 million fine, the Senators argued, is an insignificant amount for the B.C.C.I., reportedly the seventh largest private bank in the world, with assets of more than $20 billion. Those assets were nourished by numerous secret accounts that the bank handled for Manuel Antonio Noriega, now under indictment for helping the cartel launder funds.

The B.C.C.I. also has the staunchly conservative Senator Orrin Hatch on its side. On February 22 Hatch strode to the Senate floor to deliver an attack on those legislators who thought the B.C.C.I. had got off easy. In defending the bank, he downplayed its association with Noriega, claiming that it held "but a fraction" of the $200 million to $300 million in foreign accounts Noriega maintained, and that most of these funds belonged to the Panamanian Defense Force. The B.C.C.I.'s own records, however, show that Noriega had at least $29 million, and perhaps nearly $50 million, on deposit, all of it registered directly to him, not to the P.D.F. Noriega used $400,000 from those accounts to purchase an apartment in Paris. He and his family obtained Visa cards through the bank and deployed them at such military supply outlets as Gucci in Paris, Bloomingdale's in New York, the Hilton Hawaiian Village in Honolulu and K-Mart in Miami, running up monthly bills that peaked at $25,000. Hatch's spokesperson says that the Senator made his statement following talks with Kerry, the Justice Department and—no surprise—representatives of the Arent, Fox firm, which even at $300 per hour per attorney has proved to be a good investment for the B.C.C.I.

■ And Retail Price Fixing

Howard Metzenbaum is one of the few members of Congress who represent a decent investment for taxpayers. He is that rare breed of lawmaker willing to ponder issues of corporate concentration. His clumsily titled Consumer Protection Against Price-Fixing Act is not what passes for sexy legislation in this town, but it could mean a great deal to a low-income family shopping for a television set or a refrigerator. Vertical price fixing occurs when a wholesaler and retailer collude to set prices. "Resale price maintenance," the business euphemism for this practice, often targets discount stores that undersell the more tony shops. Proving vertical price fixing has been hampered severely by the Supreme Court, which in 1988 ruled that a conspiracy between a retailer and a manufacturer to cut off a discounter could not be considered price fixing unless the conspiring retailer and manufacturer also explicitly agreed on a price level.

In a dramatic moment last month at a Judiciary Committee meeting, Metzenbaum craftily won a narrow victory for his measure, which would undo the Court's decision. Senator Strom Thurmond, a chief opponent of the measure, called for a vote on the bill, indicating he thought he had the votes to kill it. But at the last minute Metzenbaum announced he had the proxy of the absent Dennis DeConcini in support of the measure, which then passed 7 to 6. The bill now moves to the Senate floor, where vigorous industry opposition will continue. Fully enforced laws against price fixing could save consumers several billion dollars each year. A success here would surely make Metzenbaum one of the few lawmakers worth last year's pay raise.

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ARTICLES.

'FETAL RIGHTS'

A New Assault On Feminism

KATHA POLLITT

Some scenes from the way we live now:

§ In New York City, a pregnant woman orders a glass of wine with her restaurant meal. A stranger comes over to her table. "Don't you know you're poisoning your baby?" he says angrily, pointing to a city-mandated sign warning women that drinking during pregnancy can cause birth defects.

§ In California, Pamela Rae Stewart is advised by her obstetrician to stay off her feet, to eschew sex and "street drugs," and to go to the hospital immediately if she starts to bleed. She fails to follow this advice and delivers a brain-damaged baby who soon dies. She is charged with failing to deliver support to a child under an old criminal statute that was intended to force men to provide for women they have made pregnant.

§ In Washington, D.C., a hospital administration asks a court whether it should intervene and perform a Caesarean section on Angela Carder, seriously ill with cancer, against her wishes and those of her husband, her parents and her doctors. Acknowledging that the operation would probably shorten her life without necessarily saving the life of her 25-week-old fetus, the judge nonetheless provides the order. The Caesarean is performed immediately, before her lawyers can appeal. Angela Carder dies; so does her unviable fetus. That incident is subsequently dramatized on *L.A. Law*, with postfeminist softy Ann Kelsey arguing for the hospital; on TV the baby lives.

§ In the Midwest, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, ruling in *UAW v. Johnson Controls*, upholds an automotive battery plant's seven-year-old "fetal protection policy" barring fertile women (in effect, all women) from jobs that would expose them to lead [see Carolyn Marshall, "An Excuse for Workplace Hazard," April 25, 1987]. The court discounts testimony about the individual reproductive lives and plans of female employees (many in their late 40s, celibate and/or with completed families), testimony showing that no child born to female employees had shown ill effects traceable to lead exposure and testimony showing that lead poses a comparable danger to male reproductive health. The court accepts testimony that says making the workplace safe would be too expensive.

All over the country, pregnant women who use illegal drugs and/or alcohol are targeted by the criminal justice system. They are "preventively detained" by judges who mete out jail sentences for minor crimes that would ordinarily result in probation or a fine; charged with child abuse or neglect (although by law the fetus is not a child) and threatened with manslaughter charges should they miscarry; and placed under court orders not to drink, although drinking is not a crime and does not invariably (or even usually) result in birth defects. While state legislatures ponder bills that would authorize these questionable practices by criminalizing drug use or "excessive" alcohol use during pregnancy (California Senator Pete Wilson is pushing a similar bill at the federal level), mothers are arrested in their hospital beds when their newborns test positive for drugs. Social workers increasingly remove positive-testing babies into foster care on the presumption that even a single use of drugs during pregnancy renders a mother ipso facto an unfit parent.

What's going on here? Right now the hot area in the developing issue of "fetal rights" is the use of drugs and alcohol during pregnancy. We've all seen the nightly news reports of inner-city intensive care units overflowing with crack babies, of Indian reservations where one in four children are said to be born physically and mentally stunted by fetal alcohol syndrome (F.A.S.) or the milder, but still serious, fetal alcohol effect. We've read the front-page stories reporting studies that suggest staggering rates of drug use during pregnancy (11 percent, according to *The New York Times*, or 375,000 women per year) and the dangers of even moderate drinking during pregnancy.

But drugs and alcohol are only the latest focus of a preoccupation with the fetus and its "rights" that has been wandering around the *Zeitgeist* for the past decade. A few years ago, the big issue was forced Caesareans. (It was, in fact, largely thanks to the horrific Angela Carder case – one of the few involving a white, middle-class woman – that the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists condemned the practice, which nonetheless has not entirely ceased.) If the Supreme Court upholds the *Johnson Controls* decision, the next battleground may be the workplace. The "save the babies" mentality may look like a necessary, if troubling, approach when it's a matter of keeping a drug addict away from a substance that is, after all, illegal. What happens if the same mentality is applied to some 15 million to 20 million highly paid unionized jobs in heavy industry to "protect" fetuses that do not even exist? Or if the list of things women are put on legal notice to avoid expands to match medical findings on the dangers to the fetus posed by junk food, salt, aspirin, air travel and cigarettes?

Critics of the punitive approach to pregnant drug and alcohol users point out the ironies inherent in treating a public-health concern as a matter for the criminal justice

Katha Pollitt is working on a collection of essays about women's issues. She would like to express her thanks to Joan E. Bertin and Lynn Paltrow of the A.C.L.U. for their generous sharing of time, ideas and information, and to Janet Gallagher, whose "Prenatal Invasions and Interventions: What's Wrong with Fetal Rights" (Harvard Women's Law Journal, *vol. 10) brilliantly analyzes the pitfalls of the duty of care ethic.*

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system: the contradiction, for instance, of punishing addicted women when most drug treatment programs refuse to accept pregnant women. Indeed, Jennifer Johnson, a Florida woman who was the first person convicted after giving birth to a baby who tested positive for cocaine, had sought treatment and been turned away. (In her case the charge was delivering drugs to a minor.) The critics point out that threats of jail or the loss of their kids may drive women away from prenatal care and hospital deliveries, and that almost all the women affected so far have been poor and black or Latino, without private doctors to protect them (in Florida, nonwhite women are ten times as likely to be reported for substance abuse as white women, although rates of drug use are actually higher for whites).

These are all important points. But they leave unchallenged the notion of fetal rights itself. What we really ought to be asking is, How have we come to see women as the major threat to the health of their newborns, and the womb as the most dangerous place a child will ever inhabit? Why is our basic model "innocent" fetuses that would be fine if only presumably "guilty" women refrained from indulging their "whims"? The list of dangers to the fetus is, after all, very long; the list of dangers to children even longer. Why does maternal behavior, a relatively small piece of the total picture, seem such an urgent matter, while much more important factors—that one in five pregnant women receive no prenatal care at all, for instance—attract so little attention? Here are some of the strands that make up the current tangle that is fetal rights.

The Assault on the Poor

It would be pleasant to report that the aura of crisis surrounding crack and F.A.S. babies—the urge to do *something*, however unconstitutional or cruel, that suddenly pervades society, from judge's bench to chic dinner party to 7 o'clock news—was part of a massive national campaign to help women have healthy, wanted pregnancies and healthy babies. But significantly, the current wave of concern is not occurring in that context. Judges order pregnant addicts to jail, but they don't order drug treatment programs to accept them, or Medicaid, which pays for heroin treatment, to cover crack addiction—let alone order landlords not to evict them, or obstetricians to take uninsured women as patients, or the federal government to fund fully the Women, Infants, and Children supplemental feeding program, which reaches only two-thirds of those who are eligible. The policies that have underwritten maternal and infant health in most of the industrialized West since World War II—a national health service, paid maternity leave, direct payments to mothers, government-funded day care, home health visitors for new mothers, welfare payments that reflect the cost of living—are still regarded in the United States by even the most liberal as hopeless causes, and by everyone else as budget-breaking giveaways to the undeserving, pie-in-the-sky items from a mad socialist's wish list.

The focus on maternal behavior allows the government to appear to be concerned about babies without having to spend any money, change any priorities or challenge any

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vested interests. As with crime, as with poverty, a complicated, multifaceted problem is construed as a matter of freely chosen individual behavior. We have crime because we have lots of bad people, poverty because we have lots of lazy people (Republican version) or lots of pathological people (Democratic version), and tiny, sickly, impaired babies because we have lots of women who just don't give a damn.

Once the problem has been defined as original sin, coercion and punishment start to look like hardheaded and common-sensical answers. Thus, syndicated columnist and *New Republic* intellectual Charles Krauthammer proposes locking up pregnant drug users en masse. Never mind the impracticality of the notion—suddenly the same Administration that refuses to pay for drug treatment and prenatal care is supposed to finance all that plus nine months of detention for hundreds of thousands of women a year. Or its disregard of real life—what, for example, about the children those women already have? Do they go to jail, too, like Little Dorrit? Or join the rolls of the notorious foster care system? The satisfactions of the punitive mind-set sweep all such considerations aside. (Nor are liberal pundits immune from its spell. Around the same time Krauthammer was calling for mass incarceration, Mary McGrory was suggesting that we stop wasting resources—*what* resources?—on addicted women and simply put their babies in orphanages.)

The New Temperance

While rightly sounding the alarm about the health risks and social costs of drugs, alcohol and nicotine, the various "just say no" crusades have so upped the moral ante across the board that it is now difficult to distinguish between levels and kinds of substance use and abuse and even rather suspect to try. A joint on the weekend is the moral equivalent of a twenty-four-hour-a-day crack habit; wine with meals is next door to a daily quart of rotgut. The stigmatizing of addicts, casual users, alcoholics, social drinkers and smokers makes punitive measures against them palatable. It also helps us avoid uncomfortable questions about why we are having all these "substance abuse" epidemics in the first place. Finally, it lets us assume, not always correctly, that drugs and alcohol, all by themselves, cause harm during pregnancy, and ignore the role of malnutrition, violence, chaotic lives, serious maternal health problems and lack of medical care.

Science Marches On

We know a lot more about fetal development than we did twenty years ago. But how much of what we know will we continue to know in ten years? As recently as the early 1970s, pregnant women were harassed by their doctors to keep their weight down. They were urged to take tranquilizers and other prescription drugs, to drink in moderation (liquor was routinely used to stop premature labor), to deliver under anesthesia and not bother to breast-feed. Then too, studies examined contemporary wisdom and found it good. Today, those precepts seem the obvious expression of social forces: the wish of doctors to control pregnancy and delivery, a lack of respect for women and a distaste for female physiological processes. It was not the disinterested progress of science that outmoded these practices. It was another set of social forces: the women's movement, the prepared-childbirth movement and the natural-health movement.

What about today's precepts? At the very least, the history of scientific research into pregnancy and childbirth ought to make us skeptical. Instead, we leap to embrace tentative findings and outright bad science because they fit current social prejudices. Those who argue for total abstinence during pregnancy have made much, for example, of a recent study in *The New England Journal of Medicine* that claimed women are more vulnerable than men to alcohol because they have less of a stomach enzyme that neutralizes it before it enters the bloodstream. Universally unreported, however, was the fact that the study included alcoholics and patients with gastrointestinal disease. It is a basic rule of medical research that results cannot be generalized from the sick to the healthy.

In a 1989 article in *The Lancet*, "Bias Against the Null Hypothesis: The Reproductive Hazards of Cocaine," Canadian researchers reported that studies that found a connec-

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tion between cocaine use and poor pregnancy outcome had a better than even chance of being accepted for presentation at the annual meeting of the Society for Pediatric Research, while studies that found no connection had a negligible chance – although the latter were better designed. While it's hard to imagine that anyone will ever show that heavy drug use or alcohol consumption is good for fetal development, studies like this one suggest that when the dust settles (because the drug war is officially "won"? because someone finally looks at the newborns of Italy, where everyone drinks moderate amounts of wine with food, and finds them to be perfectly fine?) the current scientific wisdom will look alarmist.

Media Bias

The assumptions that shape the way researchers frame their studies and the questions they choose to investigate are magnified by bias in the news media. Studies that show the bad effects of maternal behavior make the headlines, studies that show no bad effects don't get reported and studies that show the bad effects of paternal behavior (alcoholic males, and males who drink at conception, have been linked to lower I.Q. and a propensity to alcoholism in offspring) get two paragraphs in the science section. So did the study, briefly mentioned in a recent issue of *The New York Times*, suggesting that housewives run a higher risk than working women of having premature babies, stillbirths, underweight babies and babies who die in the first week of life. Imagine the publicity had it come out the other way around! Numbers that back up the feeling of crisis (those 375,000 drug-taking pregnant women) are presented as monolithic, although they cover a wide range of behavior (from daily use of cocaine to marijuana use during delivery, which some midwives recommend, and for which one Long Island woman lost custody of her newborn for eight months), and are illustrated by dire examples of harm that properly apply only to the most hard-core cases.

The 'Pro-life' Movement

Antichoicers have not succeeded in criminalizing abortion but they have made it inaccessible to millions of women (only sixteen states pay for poor women's abortions, and only 18 percent of counties have even one abortion provider) and made it a badge of sin and failure for millions more. In Sweden, where heavy drinking is common, relatively few F.A.S. babies are born, because alcoholic women have ready access to abortion and it is not a stigmatized choice. In America antichoice sentiment makes it impossible to suggest to a homeless, malnourished, venereally diseased crack addict that her first priority ought to be getting well: Get help, then have a baby. While the possibility of coerced abortions is something to be wary of, the current policy of regulation and punishment in the name of the fetus ironically risks the same end. Faced with criminal charges, pregnant women may seek abortions in order to stay out of jail (a Washington, D.C., woman who "miscarried" a few days before sentencing may have done just that).

As lobbyists, antichoicers have sought to bolster their cause by interjecting the fetus-as-person argument into a wide variety of situations that would seem to have nothing to do with abortion. They have fought to exclude pregnant women from proposed legislation recognizing the validity of "living wills" that reject the use of life support systems (coma baby lives!), and have campaigned to classify as homicides assaults on pregnant women that result in fetal death or miscarriage. Arcane as such proposals may seem, they have the effect of broadening little by little the areas of the law in which the fetus is regarded as a person, and in which the woman is regarded as its container.

At a deeper level, the "pro-life" movement has polluted the way we think about pregnancy. It has promoted a model of pregnancy as a condition that by its very nature pits women and fetuses against each other, with the fetus invariably taking precedence, and a model of women as selfish, confused, potentially violent and incapable of making responsible choices. As the "rights" of the fetus grow and respect for the capacities and rights of women declines, it becomes harder and harder to explain why drug addiction is a crime if it produces an addicted baby, but not if it produces a miscarriage, and why a woman can choose abortion but not vodka. And that is just what the "pro-lifers" want.

The Privileged Status of the Fetus

Pro-choice activists rightly argue that antiabortion and fetal-rights advocates grant fetuses more rights than women. A point less often made is that they grant fetuses more rights than 2-year-olds – the right, for example, to a safe, healthy place to live. No court in this country would ever rule that a parent must undergo a medical procedure in order to benefit a child, even if that procedure is as riskless as a blood donation and the child is sure to die without it. (A Seattle woman is currently suing the father of her leukemic child to force him to donate bone marrow, but she is sure to lose, and her mere attempt roused *Newsday* science writer B.D. Colen to heights of choler unusual even for him.) Nor would a court force someone who had promised to donate a kidney and then changed his mind to keep his date with the organ bank. Yet, as the forced-Caesarean issue shows, we seem willing to deny the basic right of bodily integrity to pregnant women and to give the fetus rights we deny children.

Although concern for the fetus may look like a way of helping children, it is actually, in a funny way, a substitute for it. It is an illusion to think that by "protecting" the fetus from its mother's behavior we have insured a healthy birth, a healthy infancy or a healthy childhood, and that the only insurmountable obstacle for crack babies is prenatal exposure to crack.

It is no coincidence that we are obsessed with pregnant women's behavior at the same time that children's health is declining, by virtually any yardstick one chooses. Take general well-being: In constant dollars, welfare payments are now about two-thirds the 1965 level. Take housing: Thousands of children are now growing up in homeless shelters and welfare hotels. Even desperately alcoholic women bear healthy babies two-thirds of the time. Will two-thirds of today's homeless kids emerge unscathed from their

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dangerous and lead-permeated environments? Take access to medical care: Inner-city hospitals are closing all over the country, millions of kids have no health insurance and most doctors refuse uninsured or Medicaid patients. Even immunization rates are down: Whooping cough and measles are on the rise.

The 'Duty of Care'

Not everyone who favors legal intervention to protect the fetus is antichoice. Some pro-choicers support the coercion and punishment of addicts and alcoholics—uneasily, like some of my liberal women friends, or gleefully, like Alan Dershowitz, who dismisses as absurd the "slippery slope" argument (crack today, cigarettes tomorrow) he finds so persuasive when applied to First Amendment issues. For some years now bioethicists have been fascinated by the doctrine of "duty of care," expounded most rigorously by Margery Shaw and John Robertson. In this view, a woman can abort, but once she has decided to bear a child she has a moral, and should have a legal, responsibility to insure a healthy birth. It's an attractive notion because it seems to combine an acceptance of abortion with intuitive feelings shared by just about everyone, including this writer, that pregnancy is a serious undertaking, that society has an interest in the health of babies, that the fetus, although not a person, is also not property.

Whatever its merits as a sentiment, though, the duty of care is a legal disaster. Exactly when, for instance, does the decision to keep a pregnancy take place? For the most desperately addicted—the crack addicts who live on the subway or prostitute themselves for drugs—one may ask if they ever form any idea ordinary people would call a decision, or indeed know they are pregnant until they are practically in labor. Certainly the inaccessibility of abortion denies millions of women the ability to decide.

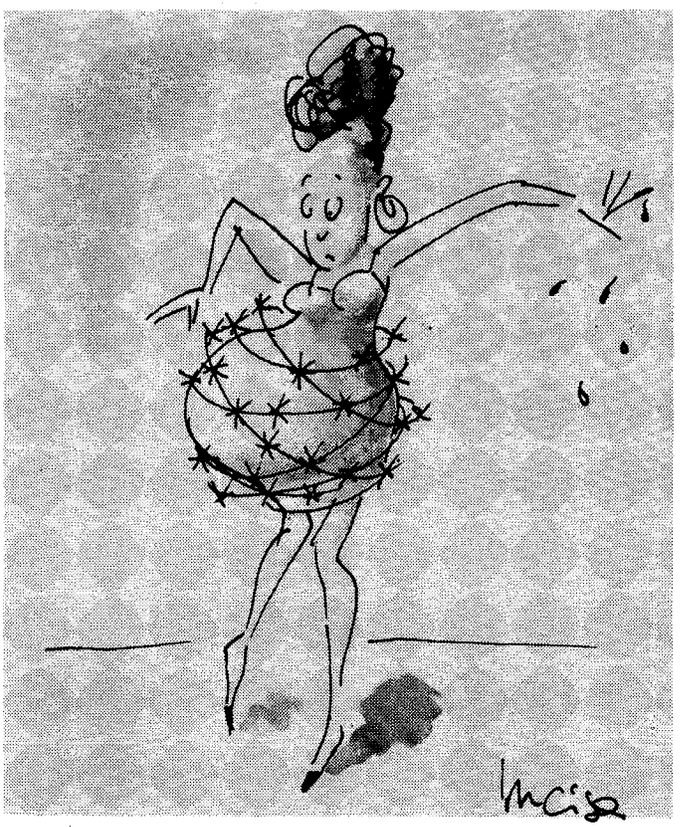
But for almost all women the decision to carry a pregnancy to term has important, if usually unstated, qualifications. What one owes the fetus is balanced against other considerations, such as serious health risks to oneself (taking chemotherapy or other crucial medication), or the need to feed one's family (keeping a job that may pose risks) or to care for the children one already has (not getting the bed rest the doctor says you need). Why should pregnant women be barred from considering their own interests? It is, after all, what parents do all the time. The model of women's relation to the fetus proposed by the duty of care ethicists is an abstraction that ignores the realities of life even when they affect the fetus itself. In real life, for instance, to quit one's dangerous job means to lose one's health insurance, thus exposing the fetus to another set of risks.

It is also, even as an abstraction, a false picture. Try as she might, a woman cannot insure a healthy newborn; nor can statistical studies of probability (even well-designed ones) be related in an airtight way to individual cases. We know that cigarettes cause lung cancer, but try proving in a court of law that cigarettes and not air pollution, your job, your genes or causes unknown caused *your* lung cancer.

Yet far from shrinking from the slippery slope, duty of care theorists positively hurl themselves down it. Margery Shaw, for instance, believes that the production of an imperfect newborn should make a woman liable to criminal charges and "wrongful life" suits if she knows, or should have known, the risk involved in her behavior, whether it's drinking when her period is late (she has a duty to keep track of her cycle), delivering at home when her doctor advises her not to (what doctor doesn't?) or failing to abort a genetically damaged fetus (which she has a duty to find out about). So much for that "decision" to bear a child—a woman can't qualify it in her own interests but the state can revoke it for her on eugenic grounds.

As these examples show, there is no way to limit the duty of care to cases of flagrant or illegal misbehavior—duty is duty, and risk is risk. Thus, there is no way to enshrine duty of care in law without creating the sort of Romania-style fetal-police state whose possibility Dershowitz, among others, pooh-poohs. For there is no way to define the limits of what a pregnant woman must sacrifice for fetal benefit, or what she "should have known," or at what point a trivial risk becomes significant. My aunt advised me to get rid of my cats while I was pregnant because of the risk of toxoplasmosis. My doctor and I thought this rather extreme, and my husband simply took charge of the litter box. What if my doctor had backed up my aunt instead of me? If the worst had happened (and it always does to someone, somewhere), would I have been charged with the crime of not sending my cats to the Bide-A-Wee?

Although duty of care theorists would impose upon women a virtually limitless obligation to put the fetus first, they impose that responsibility *only* on women. Philosophy being what it is, perhaps it should not surprise us that they



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place no corresponding duty upon society as a whole. But what about Dad? It's his kid too, after all. His drug and alcohol use, his prescription medications, his workplace exposure and general habits of health not only play a part in determining the quality of his sperm but affect the course of pregnancy as well. Cocaine dust and smoke from crack, marijuana and tobacco present dangers to others who breathe them; his alcoholism often bolsters hers. Does he have a duty of care to make it possible for his pregnant partner to obey those judge's orders and that doctor's advice that now has the force of law? To quit his job to mind the children so that she can get the bed rest without which her fetus may be harmed? Apparently not.

The sexist bias of duty of care has already had alarming legal consequences. In the Pamela Rae Stewart case cited at the beginning of this article, Stewart's husband, who had heard the doctor's advice, ignored it all and beat his wife into the bargain. Everything she did, he did—they had sex together, smoked pot together, delayed getting to the hospital together—but he was not charged with a crime, not even with wife-beating, although no one can say that his assaults were not a contributing cause of the infant's injury and death. In Tennessee, a husband succeeded in getting a court order forbidding his wife to drink or take drugs, although he himself had lost his driver's license for driving while intoxicated. In Wyoming, a pregnant woman was arrested for drinking when she presented herself at the hospital for treatment of injuries inflicted by her husband. Those charges were dropped (to be reinstated, should her baby be born with defects), but none were instituted against her spouse.

It is interesting to note in this regard that approximately one in twelve women are beaten during pregnancy, a time when many previously nonviolent men become brutal. We do not know how many miscarriages, stillbirths and damaged newborns are due, or partly due, to male violence—this is itself a comment on the skewed nature of supposedly objective scientific research. But if it ever does come to be an officially recognized factor in fetal health, the duty of care would probably take yet another ironic twist and hold battered pregnant women liable for their partner's assaults.

The Broken Cord, Michael Dorris's much-praised memoir of his adopted F.A.S. child, Adam, is a textbook example of the way in which all these social trends come together—and the largely uncritical attention the book has received shows how seductive a pattern they make. Dorris has nothing but contempt for Adam's birth mother. Perhaps it is asking too much of human nature to expect him to feel much sympathy for her. He has witnessed, in the most intimate and heartbreaking way, the damage her alcoholism did, and seen the ruin of his every hope for Adam, who is deeply retarded. But why is his anger directed only at her? Here was a seriously alcoholic woman, living on an Indian reservation where heavy drinking is a way of life, along with poverty, squalor, violence, despair and powerlessness, where, one might even say, a kind of racial suicide is taking place, with liquor as the weapon of choice. Adam's mother, in fact, died two years after his birth from drinking antifreeze.

Dorris dismisses any consideration of these facts as bleeding-heart fuzzy-mindedness. Like Hope on *thirtysomething*, Adam's mother "decides" to have a baby; like the martini-sipping pregnant woman Dorris badgers in an airport bar, she "chooses" to drink out of "weakness" and "self-indulgence."

Dorris proposes preventive detention of alcoholic pregnant women and quotes sympathetically a social worker who thinks the real answer is sterilization. Why do alcoholic Indian women have so many children? To up their government checks. (In fact, Bureau of Indian Affairs hospitals are prohibited by law from performing abortions, even if women can pay for them.) And why, according to Dorris, do they drink so much in the first place? Because of the feminist movement, which has undermined the traditional temperance of reservation women.

The women's movement has had about as much effect on impoverished reservation dwellers as it had on the slum women of eighteenth-century London, whose heavy binge drinking—and stunted babies—appalled contemporary observers. That Dorris pins the blame on such an improbable villain points to what fetal rights is really about—controlling women. It's a reaction to legalized abortion and contraception, which have given women, for the first time in history, real reproductive power. They can have a baby, they can "kill" a baby, they can refuse to conceive at all, without asking permission from anyone. More broadly, it's an index of deep discomfort with the notion of women as self-directed social beings, for whom parenthood is only one aspect of life, as it has always been for men. Never mind that in the real world, women still want children, have children and take care of children, often under the most discouraging circumstances and at tremendous emotional, economic and physical cost. There is still a vague but powerful cultural fear that one of these days, women will just walk out on the whole business of motherhood and the large helpings of humble pie we have, as a society, built into that task. And *then* where will we be?

Looked at in this light, the inconsistent and fitful nature of our concern about the health of babies forms a pattern. The threat to newborns is interesting when and only when it can, accurately or fancifully, be laid at women's doorstep. Babies "possibly" impaired by maternal drinking? Front-page stories, a national wave of alarm. A *New England Journal of Medicine* report that 16 percent of American children have been mentally and neurologically damaged because of exposure to lead, mostly from flaking lead paint in substandard housing? Peter Jennings looks mournful and suggests that "all parents can do" is to have their children tested frequently. If the mother isn't to blame, no one is to blame.

In its various aspects "fetal rights" attacks virtually all the gains of the women's movement. Forced medical treatment attacks women's increased control over pregnancy and delivery by putting doctors back in the driver's seat, with judges to back them up. The *Johnson Controls* decision reverses the entry of women into high-paying, unionized, traditionally male jobs. In the female ghetto, where women

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can hardly be dispensed with, the growing practice of laying off or shifting pregnant women around transforms women, whose rates of labor-force participation are approaching those of men, into casual laborers with reduced access to benefits, pensions, seniority and promotions. In a particularly vicious twist of the knife, "fetal rights" makes legal abortion—which makes all the other gains possible—the trigger for a loss of human rights. Like the divorce-court judges who tell middle-aged housewives to go out and get a job, or who favor fathers in custody disputes because to recognize the primary-caretaker role of mothers would be "sexist," protectors of the fetus enlist the rhetoric of feminism to punish women.

There are lots of things wrong with the concept of fetal rights. It posits a world in which women will be held accountable, on sketchy or no evidence, for birth defects; in which all fertile women will be treated as potentially pregnant all the time; in which courts, employers, social workers and doctors—not to mention nosy neighbors and vengeful male partners—will monitor women's behavior. It imposes responsibilities without giving women the wherewithal to fulfill them, and places upon women alone duties that belong to both parents and to the community.

But the worst thing about fetal rights is that it portrays a woman as having only contingent value. Her work, her health, her choices and needs and beliefs, can all be set aside in an instant because, next to maternity, they are all perceived as trivial. For the middle class, fetal rights is mostly symbolic, the gateway to a view of motherhood as self-sacrifice and endless guilty soul-searching. It ties in neatly with the currently fashionable suspicion of working mothers, day care and (now that wives are more likely than husbands to sue for it) divorce. For the poor, for whom it means jail and the loss of custody, it becomes a way of saying that women can't even be mothers. They can only be potting soil.

The plight of addicted and alcohol-impaired babies is indeed a tragedy. Finally, we are forced to look at the results of our harsh neglect of the welfare and working poor, and it's only natural that we don't like what we see. We are indeed in danger of losing a generation. But what about the generation we already have? Why is it so hard for us to see that the tragedy of Adam Dorris is inextricable from the tragedy of his mother? Why is her loss—to society, to herself—so easy to dismiss?

"People are always talking about women's duties to others," said Lynn Paltrow, the A.C.L.U. lawyer who successfully led the Pamela Rae Stewart defense, "as though women were not the chief caregivers in this society. But no one talks about women's duty of care to *themselves*. A pregnant addict or alcoholic needs to get help for *herself*. She's not just potentially ruining someone else's life. She's ruining her own life.

"Why isn't her own life important? Why don't we care about her?" □

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LETTER FROM EUROPE

Communism's Great Debate

DANIEL SINGER

"Is the Communist Party of the Soviet Union still the ruling party, the political vanguard of the people? . . . Should there be a multiparty system? Does the C.P.S.U. still adhere firmly to Communist ideals or is it leaning toward social democracy? Does it fully foresee the social and political consequences of establishing a market economy?" These are not the questions of a critic, a member of the opposition. They were posed on February 6 at the plenary meeting of the party's Central Committee by the Soviet Prime Minister, Nikolai Ryzhkov, and they illustrate the gravity of the situation.

Nineteen-ninety looks like a turning point for *perestroika*. Citizens of the Soviet Union are now busy electing their local and republic parliamentary councils, or soviets. As soon as that is over, party members will pick the delegates for the 28th Party Congress, to be held at the end of June or in early July. This congress should endorse the platform that was produced by the plenary, defining party policy for the forthcoming period. Thus, exactly five years after the spectacular debut of the relatively young Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet Union has two major questions on its agenda: the problem of power, with the Communist Party apparently resigned to abandoning the principle of its monopoly as a birthright, and the problem of property, as economic reform starts to reduce the realm of state ownership.

While the two issues are fundamentally linked, the connection is not necessarily obvious at once. The platform, as Boris Yeltsin aptly put it, often reads as if it were "written by two hands, a right hand and a left hand." This duality is the result partly of contradictions within the leadership and partly of indecision. On the one side, the reformers, who stood together while the battle was over *glasnost* and the recovery of the country's historical memory, are falling apart as they differ over the future: How far and how fast should the country move in the direction of capitalism? On the other side, the apparatchiks, with their backs to the wall, are trying to recover by exploiting Great Russian jingoism as well as popular fears of unemployment and growing social differences. This complex battle is gaining in passion and violence as it approaches its climax.

Property and Power. In one sense, the changes in forms

Daniel Singer is The Nation*'s Europe correspondent.*

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Each writer, editor of a student publication or faculty member may submit up to three separate entries. A series of related articles will be considered as a single entry. Investigative articles are particularly encouraged. There are no restrictions as to scope, content or length.

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of property will not have an important immediate impact on the Soviet economy. Except for the small plots owned by collective farmers, private property plays a marginal role and will continue to do so for some time, at least in the towns. Yet potentially the economic interests involved are enormous and the political consequences vital. Leonid Abalkin, the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of economic reform, presented the draft law on ownership in mid-February. He and his colleagues have destroyed one myth—that Soviet workers are the masters of their factories and thus the first in the world to have moved beyond alienation. This debunking had the obvious purpose of placing all forms of ownership on the same level, whether state, collective or private.

This approach could simply mean that socialist property, when it is finally invented, will have to prove its superiority in competition with other forms of ownership. But it could also be an attempt to replace one mystification with an even bigger one: that socialism can be reconciled with the private ownership of the means of production. Indeed, the section of the party platform devoted to this subject reads like the product of a split mind. It says that individual (or private) property may "include ownership of the means of production" and, in the next sentence, rules out the exploitation of one person by another in the Soviet Union. This is not just a theoretical aberration. It looks like a loophole through which new property relations could be smuggled—and not just the right of the Soviet citizen to own and bequeath a house or start a small enterprise. It could be the framework for capital—foreign and then domestic—to take over big plants, along Eastern European lines.

The Soviet leaders are not there yet. They clearly have not made up their minds about how far to go. The party document points out that one of the major difficulties of reform

is to find "an organic combination of plan and market methods to regulate economic activity." Nevertheless, there are two indications that the marketeers and privatizers are in the ascendancy in the leadership. One is the emphasis on the need for a rapid "incorporation of the Soviet economy into world economic relations and the transfer to the convertible ruble"; such a loss of control over the country's foreign trade would probably determine the evolution of its economic and political system. The second is the absence of any concrete proposals for increased powers for the working people in their factories and offices. Mikhail Gorbachev did for a time toy with the idea of giving workers the right to elect their managers. Here was the perfect opportunity to elaborate on this idea, to give working people a genuine say in the organization of their labor and thereby pave the way for socialist property. But such a development was conspicuously absent. Thus, even if economic reform were to prove as radical as some of its advocates maintain, it would be nothing more than a managerial revolution.

Vanishing Vanguard. The re-emergence of political parties could be justified, in Marxist terms, on the grounds of the persistence of class and other social conflicts. It is accepted, less theoretically, as a fact of life. To quote Ryzhkov again, it is too late to debate the necessity of a multiparty system since "it is a *fait accompli.*" Judging by the fierce debate in the last Central Committee meeting, it even exists within the Communist Party. The leadership has welcomed the inevitable. The problem concerns the legal framework within which such a system will be allowed to develop, and here Yeltsin and the Interregional Group of oppositionists in the Congress of People's Deputies are right in posing a series of questions. (Significantly, their own "democratic platform" was published by *Pravda* on March 3.)

Abandoning the "leading role" of the party means altering Article 6 of the Constitution, which was introduced not under Stalin but under Brezhnev. Mikhail Gorbachev added in his speech to the February plenum that this "can lead at some stage to the creation of parties." It is not specified as yet when and how. Nor is it clarified who will determine whether these parties have a constitutional right to exist, assuming that they do not preach "violence and interethnic strife."

No longer a vanguard by divine right, the party would like to achieve a leading role by political action. Indeed, the platform acknowledges that the party must be completely reorganized if it is not to be "driven to the sidelines of political life." In this overhaul even the old principle of democratic centralism is to be revised. Yet what prerogatives will be granted to minorities, what possibilities offered to the rank and file to organize horizontally? And what electoral guarantees will be given to insure that power does not always flow from above? Such questions, raised by Yeltsin and company, are relevant even if the trend toward greater democracy is unmistakable.

More complex is the proposed new relationship between Parliament and the president. The Communist Party is no longer supposed to run the economic and political life of the country directly at all levels but is to try to exercise its influence through the soviets, which are now being elected. At

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the same time, as if the party doubted its capacity to win a dominant position by electoral means, it proposes to strengthen the powers of the president. On February 27, after a stormy debate, the Supreme Soviet approved the bill defining his prerogatives, although it must still be endorsed by the Congress of People's Deputies. The president will head a supercabinet including the prime minister; he will have control over the armed forces and the K.G.B.; he will be able to declare martial law and, as in France, dissolve Parliament and call a new election. In short, the president, and no longer the general secretary, is to become the key figure in the Soviet Union. In the long run, this president is to be elected for five years by universal suffrage, though the first incumbent, who will certainly be Mikhail Gorbachev, has chosen the safer way of securing his four-year mandate from the existing congress of deputies.

The word soviet, with all its connotations, adds an artificial touch of drama to the story. The Russians seem to have opted for the presidential model of the parliamentary system—closer to the American or the French than the British—in order to protect Gorbachev for a time from unpleasant surprises. After years of czarist and party rule this is a tremendous innovation. But there is nothing particularly radical in the proposed system. No revolutionary workers' councils are being set up. (At this stage one may also ponder whether the Soviet Union, having picked parliamentary institutions perfected in bourgeois countries, will now bring its property relations in line with them or whether, if it rules out private ownership of the means of production, it will alter the nature of the institutions.)

Shifting Alliances. Are political alignments affected by the changes under way in the economic sphere? Potentially, yes. An extraordinary conference of the Union of Associated Cooperatives (a euphemism for private enterprises) was held in Moscow on February 17. One of the participants, Arkadi Murashev, a people's deputy belonging to the Interregional Group, told Moscow Radio that the interests of the association and his parliamentary group fully coincided. On the other hand, a few days later during the debate on land legislation, a deputy argued that only "the creation of a very powerful peasant party" would provide guarantees against renewed collectivization.

What we must keep in mind is that this open expression of interests is an entirely new phenomenon. Under Stalin nobody dared to speak, while under Brezhnev deals were struck behind the scenes. Now various groups are jockeying for position. The Western press does not help matters by describing as left or progressive anyone in Eastern Europe who preaches profit and private enterprise.

The Democratic Platform, a collection of groups that think *perestroika* is not proceeding fast enough, is a motley coalition. At the huge demonstration it staged in Moscow on February 4, the stage was shared by the New Leftist Boris Kagarlitsky, the historian Yuri Afanasiev and the economist Gavril Popov, whose ideal by now is probably some form of capitalist democracy. The platform was also shared by Yeltsin, who began as the scourge of all privileges and now limits his attacks to those bestowed by the state and the party. At a

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less successful demonstration on February 25, they were joined by forces further to the right, notably the Constitutional Democrats or Cadets, who have resurrected the name of a pre-revolutionary party for whom Lenin was the Devil incarnate.

The groups that united in the struggle for *glasnost* are now separating. The differences between a Gorbachev and a Yeltsin, who was triumphantly elected in Sverdlovsk and is looking more than ever like a rival, are clearly more tactical than philosophical. The Soviet leader has always tried to keep the party together, dragging the conservatives along. This hitherto successful strategy has involved caution, an approach with which Yeltsin, Afanasiev and their backers have disagreed. On the other hand, Gorbachev knows that the economic policies advocated by his former allies, with the ghost of unemployment and the prospect of big wage differentials, could antagonize the mass of the working people and thus give the conservatives the opportunity for a comeback.

Admittedly, the conservative coalition is no less heterogeneous. On February 23, in a hockey arena on the outskirts of Moscow, Nina Andreyeva, famous for her neo-Stalinist manifesto of two years ago, was cursing Gorbachev and hailing the Soviet Army, while vendors outside peddled portraits of Czar Nicholas II and monarchist tracts. Hatred of the alien, particularly the "Zionist," provided the link between the two. The several thousand people who attended could be dismissed as the lunatic fringe. Unfortunately, their chauvinism is echoed in "respectable" journals and much wider circles. There are also efforts to tie this chauvinism with growing social discontent.

Many apparatchiks think that this is the time to do or die. If they lose in both the soviet and party elections, the backbone of the bureaucracy may be broken. But they also think they can now fight back. One opportunity is offered by Russian resentment against what is happening in the outlying republics, and particularly by the resentment of millions of Russians who live there. Economic dissatisfaction and fears for the future give much more room for maneuver.

To fight for one's lost privileges is one thing, to appear as the defender of public property against private greed is quite another. It is no accident that Yegor Ligachev, the spokesman for the conservatives in the Politburo, violently opposed "the opening of the slightest chink allowing the introduction of private ownership into socialist society" and argued that such moves could only be taken after a national referendum. If memories are short, the apparatchiks could even parade as the champions of the downtrodden. Whether these disparate forces under the umbrella of the Social-Patriotic Front can make an electoral impact is uncertain, but the combination of jingoism with social discontent is potentially explosive.

Populist Backlash? When one talks to members of the so-called intelligentsia in Kiev, Moscow and Leningrad, one hears an argument not very different from that expressed in Budapest, Prague and Warsaw. One must help the reform leading to a market economy, the argument runs, because if it fails in the present political climate, with socialism discredited, the popular reaction will not be left-wing; it will be right-wing, nationalist and dangerous. While the danger is genuine, the argument is not. People run amok because they are driven to the wall and see no rational way out. The best way of avoiding that is not to drive people to desperate straits. What if the economic situation makes that unavoidable? Then austerity can be spread around so that the poorest are the least affected, while working people can be given greater democratic powers in their factories and cities, so as to insure that, when better times come, they will get their share. In other words, there can be socialist as well as managerial solutions to the present crisis, and if sections of the intelligentsia opt for the capitalist road, they do so for their own ideological reasons.

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On March 10, 1985, Konstantin Chernenko died. The next day Mikhail Gorbachev was chosen as General Secretary of the Communist Party. Five years later, as the Lithuanian vote foreshadows the collapse of the union in the form in which it was forged by Stalin, it is possible to draw a gloomy balance sheet. Angry apparatchiks did so during the session of the Central Committee. The most scathing was Vladimir Brovikov, the current Soviet Ambassador to Poland. *Perestroika*, he proclaimed, "has plunged the country into an abyss of crisis and brought it to a point where we are face to face with rampant anarchy, degradation of the economy, the leering visage of universal ruin and a collapse in morality." The Soviet Union, he went on, has been reduced to "a state with a mistaken past, a joyless present and an uncertain future."

One can obviously draw a very different picture. The fact that Brovikov can make such a speech without fear of immediate retribution shows how far the Soviet Union has come. Who would have guessed five years ago that Gorbachev would question the party's monopoly of power and still stay at the helm? That he has done so despite the economic mess shows both his skill and his staying power. Is he now seriously threatened by movements from below?

Traveling through the Soviet Union, one is struck by contrasts between activism and apathy. On the day after the great demonstration in Moscow on February 4, the participants were obviously thrilled: Ours, they proudly pointed out, was the biggest demonstration since 1917. Yet in random conversations in Moscow during the Central Committee session, and in Leningrad immediately afterward, I was struck by people's indifference. Taking *glasnost* for granted, they accused politicians of talking and talking, without this in any way affecting the lives of ordinary people. Mikhail Gorbachev's next four years will depend less on his new presidential powers than on his ability to mobilize the mass of the people, to convince them once again that there is something for them, both economically and politically, in his *perestroika*. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Andy's Alchemy

PAUL MATTICK JR.

WARHOL. *By David Bourdon. Abrams. 432 pp. $49.50.*

THE WORK OF ANDY WARHOL. *Dia Art Foundation Discussions in Contemporary Culture, Number 3. Edited by Gary Garrels. Bay Press. 196 pp. $10.95.*

THE ANDY WARHOL DIARIES. *By Andy Warhol. Edited by Pat Hackett. Warner Books. 807 pp. $29.95.*

Andy Warhol, who died almost exactly three years ago, may be the best-known artist in the world: People who cannot name a painting by Picasso know that Warhol is the guy who did the Campbell's Soup cans. And though interest in him has declined since its peak when the *Diaries* were published last spring, the stream of Warhol publications flows on, bringing us most recently David Bourdon's lavish coffee-table book. This volume, more an illustrated life than a work of art criticism, concentrates on what might be meant by the common description of Warhol as a mirror of his age: a manipulator of images, including and above all his own, who performed the alchemical feat of transmuting the love of gold into gold by declaring it equal to what has for 200 years been its cultural antithesis in the West—art.

As if in unconscious homage to this aspect of Warhol's story, the Dia Art Foundation scheduled a symposium featuring a group of curators and art historians (published as *The Work of Andy Warhol*) for the opening day of Sotheby Parke Bernet's sale of the artist's wide-ranging collections. Admitting that Warhol's artistic production cannot be disengaged from the public phenomenon of his personality, the symposium's organizer, Gary Garrels, insists that "it is the works themselves which prompt the interest in the life of Warhol and which in his absence will continue to sustain our attention." Accordingly, the participants—with the exception of a brief text on Warhol as a star by AIDS activist Simon Watney—bring the methods of art history to bear on that part of the *oeuvre* that matches most closely the traditional center of visual art, painting on canvas.

Trevor Fairbrother's essay on Warhol's skull paintings, for example, explores their relation to the artist's other visual treatments of the theme of death and attempts—implausibly and also pointlessly, since he doesn't show that this adds anything to our understanding of them—to link their iconography to late Baroque *memento mori* and tomb sculptures. Charles F. Stuckey's look at "Warhol in Context" limits itself to art-world context, discussing galleries, collectors, museum shows and above all the influence of fellow artists, and ignoring Hollywood (and the underground film scene of the 1960s) and other commercial imagery. One hardly recognizes in the high-art critic of commerce celebrated here the person Stuckey describes in an article on Warhol's work for *Playboy* in the January 1990 issue of that magazine as "first and foremost a commercial artist who was determined to think like one."

Benjamin H.D. Buchloh represents leftish art history in aligning his contribution around two of its central preoccupations: the relation between high art and mass culture as twin products of bourgeois society and the "strategies of negation and critical resistance" with which modernist art is supposed to have confronted that society. Warhol indeed seems a perfect study for such an orientation, since his career, as Buchloh puts it, "anticipated in parodic moves" the trend to the interaction of commerce and high art exemplified by such developments as corporate domination of high-culture institutions like museums and art collecting and artists' marketing of themselves as a new form of star with the goal of becoming investment opportunities. Buchloh's explanation of the power of Warhol's work by "the precision with which he . . . has incorporated into the conception of his work the actual social and economic transformations which now determine ideological and aesthetic representations" is less convincing, however, when these transformations are identified as "the fetishization of the sign and [what Jean Baudrillard calls] pure sign exchange value." One thing that Andy Warhol knew was the difference between signs and real things, and even a fast talker like Baudrillard would not have overcome Warhol's insistence on the latter, as money, real estate or collectibles.

More fundamentally, Buchloh is led astray by his fixation on the idea of modernist high art as a critique of capitalist society, of which industrially produced mass art is supposedly an affirmation. Hence the chief problem addressed by his essay is how to explain the apparently critical character of Warhol's work given the artist's "opportunistic, conformist, and conservative" politics. This is at least more plausible than Rainer Crone's depiction, later in the book, of Warhol as a working-class foe of the consumer society who merely adopted "a different strategy than some idealistically oriented European artists." But Warhol in any case was not a critic of bourgeois society or of mass culture, though he saw through its pretenses, as most people do. It's his love of Marilyn Monroe that fuels his pictures of her, as well as his awareness of the tragedy of a person caught up in what Buchloh calls "a system of representation," just as it's our appreciation of both of these that makes us respond to them. Warhol's use of the image is so close to the image itself—thanks to the photographic silk-screen technique, which interposes only the thinnest Warholian layer between the original photo of the star and the artwork we see—that it partakes of the mass of dissonant meanings carried by Monroe's face.

Nan Rosenthal is quite right to observe, early in her contribution, that certain British artists and critics saw American popular culture and its products as "something genuinely interesting, fun, and . . . transgressive"; this holds true as well for the Americans who created Pop Art, and certainly for Warhol. Rosenthal usefully emphasizes Warhol's training and career as a commercial artist and proposes that we think of him "as the *art director* of his paintings of the early 1960s." But she limits herself to using this idea to shed light on Warhol's formal decisions, without returning to the topic of the meaningfulness—the content—of commercial culture, and Warhol's use of it.

These essays taken together might, in fact, be taken to demonstrate the limitation of normal art-historical procedures for thinking about Warhol's artistic career. He is certainly part of the

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history of art, but his story marks an acceleration of the decline of the classical form of that institution, in which art was defined as a higher, spiritual value in contrast to quotidian life and the cash transactions that make it hum. Far from mounting a critique of the degradation of art or the emptiness of mass culture, Warhol embraced the commercial aspect of high art and celebrated the sign system of popular culture. His goal, in which he eminently succeeded, was to make a place for himself in the art business on the basis of his design skills and the exploitation of his pop sensibility, deriving profit from his own existence as a popular icon and celebrity.

Thus the point of the celebrated imitation Brillo boxes is not so much the difference as the more than visual similarity of artwork and original carton. This draws attention to the fact that the latter is already a product of the designer's craft, while Warhol's boxes, knocked off in large numbers like their models, unlike traditional *trompe l'oeil* representations of common objects, make no claim to elevation of the commonplace by artistic skill or vision. They can be sold as art simply because, assembled by hand in the Warhol factory for gallery sale, they bear the Warhol brand name, which makes possible the detachment of the Brillo logo from its original connection with a different product to demonstrate the centrality of such signs to our visual lives. Both uses of the design function as packaging: If the one advertises scouring pads, the other advertises the Warhol persona.

In this way, as Bourdon puts it, the artist's method generally relied on "preempting the celebrity of his subjects—from Campbell's Soup to Marilyn Monroe and Elvis Presley" to parlay "his own name and face into commercial commodities that became recognized—and valued—around the world." That is, the fame- and fortune-seeking persona is central to the functioning and meaning of Warhol's project. For this reason the work and the celebrity cannot be separated as Garrels wishes. The persona both forms part of the content of the art and is itself a work (Irving Sandler suggests, in the post-symposium discussion included in the Dia volume, that we think of it as a piece of performance art).

The art historians might do well to read the *Diaries*, for here we see the dynamic relation between person, persona and work in action. Unlike Warhol's earlier writings, this one gives the impression of catching an individual's voice; Pat Hackett, who also edited the other books, seems here to have performed the feat of reducing 20,000 pages to 800 while preserving the tone of the original. It's a charming, seductive tone—witty, ironic, touching, funny—and also a disturbing one. The people we meet here are in themselves of no great interest; despite having little on their minds but sex, drugs and money, they don't have much to say about these ever-fascinating topics. But while the stream of appointments, dinners, shopping expeditions and expenses, leavened by gossip, has its tedious moments, it serves to anchor a remarkable portrait of the upper classes and their hangers-on at leisure.

Warhol sees this world as populated by hustlers of various sorts, motivated largely by money and the goods it will buy. He doesn't hate or despise them for this, except when they neglect his needs or feelings. After all, he is a hustler too ("Some blacks recognized me a few times this weekend, and I'm trying to figure out what they recognize so I can somehow sell it to them, whatever it is"). In fact, his every encounter with the rich is overdetermined by commerce: A dinner party is at once a badge of success, and so an advertisement for his artistic products, and an occasion for the securing of new customers. This relation to his fellow bons vivants necessitates a degree of observation of them that meshes perfectly with the peculiar center of his personality in voyeurism. Warhol wants to be everywhere, and as close to the center as possible, but once there he wants, like the idiot hero of the book and film *Being There*, to watch.

The very length of the book has much to do with the peculiar effect of claustrophobia it induces. The events described, through which Warhol moves with constant traveling from scene to scene, city to city, continent to continent, remain within very narrow limits. Wherever he takes us we find the same people, and one can lose track of where one is. This reflects not only the small dimensions of the world of the rich and famous, but Warhol's own need for a restriction of experience, and a near inability to function outside the sphere of his intimates, whom he took around with him as a snail its shell. The fascination with others is accompanied by a pathological fear of contact (at mass, "I always cringe when it gets to the part of 'Peace, peace be with you,' and you have to shake hands with the people next to you. I always leave before that"). Along with this goes a refusal to exhibit signs of feeling, and a tendency to equalize events in the manner of the tabloids or TV ("Fereydoun Hoveyda's brother . . . was hanged in Iran over the weekend. Everyone's in town for Cy Twombly's opening. And I'm surprised that I wasn't invited to the dinner"). This is not unrelated to the insight realized in his paintings that Marilyn, Jackie and Mao share an identity as media constructions, as do the victims of a car accident and civil rights workers attacked by police dogs. The archetype here is the series of soup can labels, of identical design save for the different flavors. With no hierarchy of occurrences, the voice of the *Diaries* also concentrates on details. Similarly, Warhol builds character through circumstance rather than psychological analysis, in accord with his fundamental method in all things, which is attention to surface.

An important aspect of the book is the centrality of homosexuality both to the scenes it depicts and to Warhol's point of view. It gives a picture not usually sketched of the great gay presence in the art, entertainment and fashion worlds, and in the high society and culture industry that support them. But the connection is more than circumstantial. The portraits of Monroe, Liz Taylor and Troy Donahue are expressions of a specifically homosexual persona devoted to fanhood colored at once by devotion and irony and by the simultaneous engagement and disengagement with the dominant culture associated with the concept of camp, reflecting the sense of occupying a secret position within that culture from which its real nature and mechanisms are visible. This perspective casts an interesting light on Warhol's art and its success, suggesting the utility of thinking of certain aspects of gay culture as not marginal but central to the dominant one: the fascination with stars and the tragedies of their lives, which demonstrates the artifice basic to star-character; the worship of youth, strength and beauty, and in particular of male sexual power; the secret government of certain worlds—within a general context of homophobic discrimination—by interlocking old boys' networks. Warhol's particular gay identity, with affinities to the nineteenth-century dandy and to the disinterested viewpoint of classical aesthetic theory, has been well described by Stephen Koch (in one of the indispensable books on the artist, *Stargazer: Andy*

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Warhol's World and His Films) as "a refusal . . . to assume any kind of virility," whose ultimate expression was Warhol's self-transformation into an aesthetic object. The embodiment of that object-self in the *Diaries* is the perfect exemplar of the tendency of his work as a whole: the asymptotic approach to the abolition of the distinction between life—the life of commodity society—and art. □

Keeping Up With Jones

ALIX KATES SHULMAN

HOW I BECAME HETTIE JONES. *By Hettie Jones. E.P. Dutton. 239 pp. $18.95.*

Hettie Jones, *née* Cohen, for seven years the wife of writer and black militant LeRoi Jones (later Amiri Baraka), has written a thoughtful, intimate memoir of their life in the burgeoning movement of new jazz, poetry and politics that flourished in lower Manhattan in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In it she re-creates an important moment in our cultural history, recording the whirl of ideas, personalities, affairs, the drink and drugs, the poverty and parties—including the perpetual open house at the Joneses' own apartment, where all bohemia came and went—through the rise of the civil rights movement. But unlike so many other memoirs by the lovers of the famous, which are dedicated to illuminating the lives of important men, at the core of this book is a searching question about women that provides a dramatic subtext: Why did the wives of the writers and artists of the new consciousness so readily subvert their ambitions and subordinate their lives to those of their men?

Pondering that painful question in the reflected light of two decades of feminist analysis, the book vividly details the circumstances and feelings that made it virtually impossible for Jones, like most bohemian wives, to overcome the pervasive sexism of the 1950s and find the confidence and time to pursue her own ambitions amidst the proliferating responsibilities of wage earner, publisher, mother of two, homemaker, seamstress, hostess, secretary to her husband, wife. "In retrospect there's some terrible shame—how *could* we?" asks Jones, scrupulously assuming full responsibility, as if women's liberation might have been accomplished, absent a movement, by will alone.

Hettie Cohen was born in 1934 in suburban Long Island. After college in the South, like many middle-class Jewish girls of her generation ambitious to "become" someone, she moved to Manhattan and quickly found her way to Greenwich Village at the moment (1957) when the young poets, painters and jazz musicians were defining a new Beat sensibility. Through her jobs at the jazz magazine *Record Changer*, where she met LeRoi (Roi) Jones, and *Partisan Review*, where the new sensibility was being debated, she found herself near the center of the exciting downtown cultural vortex.

Soon Roi moved in with Hettie. Equal at first, together they launched the influential magazine *Yugen, a new consciousness in arts and letters* (his idea, her labor), which published work by many important new writers, including, in the first issue, Allen Ginsberg and Philip Whalen. But while Roi began to publish his work (among other places, in *Partisan*, where Hettie introduced him), Hettie, like most of the women around the Beats, kept her own writing secret. Why? To understand this silence and overcome it is part of the burden of her memoir. "At the open readings, where anyone could stand up, I remained in the cheering audience," she confesses. Not until, after an abortion, she again became pregnant and they married did she begin to sense Roi's disappointment in her. "He'd wanted the world to hear from me and it hadn't, at least not in terms of the going (male) intellectual positions. He liked my inventive clothes but where was my tongue?" Their slide apart had begun.

Soon after their wedding (at a Buddhist temple) she found everything changing rapidly. While Roi's family embraced her from the start and remained close and supportive even after her divorce, her own parents renounced her for marrying a black man. (Eventually, her mother accepted the marriage, but her father never did.) She realized that "there were different transformations awaiting us. He would remain, like any man of any race, exactly as he was, augmented," whereas she would "lose my past to share his." She felt herself increasingly relegated to the sidelines reserved for mothers, wives,

Alix Kates Shulman is the author of four novels, including Burning Questions, *which has just been reissued by Thunder's Mouth Press.*

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even women artists. Roi went out with his friends every night, hanging out at the Cedar Tavern, taking up with a string of women, "free of the slough of domesticity, the broody inelegance of playpen clutter, my milky left shoulder," while she became "a thrumming blinking bleating switchboard." Yet she was forbidden by the prevailing rules of cool to make any domestic demands on him. Or sexual ones: When she objected to his womanizing he abruptly, if temporarily, moved out, even though she was pregnant with their second child; and when she retaliated with her own affairs, he raised the double standard to rage at her.

With honesty, courage and a rare detachment she records her complicated feelings, refusing to deny either the anger that increasingly prevailed or the closeness that continued between them. In a few brief, affecting scenes she captures the isolation, rapture and utter engulfment of motherhood in that milieu, and evokes the anguish and insult of unrealized ambitions that were the common predicament of bohemian wives. Still, she doesn't complain, however ashamed she was to "bury [her] talent in a napkin," or to have "relinquished myself . . . given him power over me." Selflessly she insists, "I didn't *mind* my household life, I just couldn't do a damn thing with it." What she did mind was something else. Losing her name, she brooded over "poor discarded Hettie Cohen. With all her grand ambition, all she'd ever 'become' was Hettie Jones"—despite her sideline attempts to develop by continuing to write in secret, dance, design and sew her own clothes and act at the avant-garde Judson Poets Theater (in a play Roi never bothered to attend).

She writes with empathetic feminist insight and not a note of blame about the women friends who shared her predicament, but, as to her own failure to live up to her or Roi's expectations, she's harder on herself. No wonder—the exceptional Diane di Prima, who during that period also bore Roi a child and collaborated with him on a magazine, seemed to have no trouble writing and publishing her poems. "Diane was everything I wasn't. To begin she was single." Sometimes Jones let fly with irony, as when she gibes, "Women adore this young, so excitingly *black*, up-and-coming event. . . . Part of his charm is the way he treats them: he's kind, polite, good-humored, gentle. So they just can't help it and neither can he."

With the swell of the civil rights movement and the new militancy of the 1960s, Hettie heard Roi "shifting gears," and she recognized that "he couldn't stay King of the Hill by standing still." Despite the scenes of racial animosity, some of which she portrays, always threatening this interracial family, early in her relationship with Roi she discovered, "race disappears in the house—in the bathroom, under the covers. . . . It was a joke to us, that we were anything more than just the two of us together." But when Roi's successful plays about race thrust him to the center of the Black Power movement, where there was no place for white Hettie, race came into the house. After seven years of marriage and two children, he told her he could not take her with him to a performance of his play *Dutchman* at Howard University. The scene she recounts is searing. "I could feel it coming, like an awful tide. I said 'Why?' and then there it was: 'Because you're white.' "

He disappeared from her life, leaving it "shattered." He wouldn't speak to her, send her any money or call the children. He moved out of bohemia uptown to Harlem, divorced her, remarried and, she was told, denied her very existence. She wanted to follow Malcolm X's advice to white people to work for the black struggle in their own communities, but, living in an interracial household and excluded from "the male-dominated art world," she couldn't identify her community. That many other interracial relationships caught in the separatist politics of the time also came to abrupt ends, lending company to her misery, didn't lessen her suffering.

Still, barely a hint of rancor or bitterness remains in this judicious, fair-minded book, despite scenes of anger and hurt and suspended joys recalled through the filter of memory. Instead the tone is modest, compassionate, forgiving—not only toward her husband but toward herself. "Anger has its own kind of string. Unless you let it go it ties you down," she observes wisely from the distance of decades. "I've come to see those times—and the psychological advances of the Black Power movement—as a necessary phase in African-American, and ultimately American, history. If the contrary could be argued, I haven't troubled myself to invent it."

In a telling passage, Hettie Jones compares her father with her husband: "Both these men . . . first loved me for myself, and then discarded me when that self no longer fit their daughter/wife image. If I hadn't been myself all along I might have been left next to nothing." The poems she prints in the memoir, her dozen books for children and the memoir itself, written in strong, spare, often striking prose, are all proof of the self that remained.

At the end of the book she recounts a 1969 epiphany, a moment of clarity when, "on a sudden, wonderful, liberating wave," realizing she would never remarry, "the heavy knot of regret rose from my breast and flew out the window. Great joy in the morning! I was thirty-five years old and no longer needed what women were taught to live for!" Yet comparing this memoir with the 1984 *Autobiography of LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka*, one can't help but notice that her book opens with their meeting, flashes back for a mere twenty pages of early life and ends ten pages after their divorce, while his book presents their life together as one

LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI QUEEN

The numbing plunge of the mud,
gorging and guzzling, force-
feeding the mouth of it, all
ravening down to the gulf,
billions of bushels and barrels,
hundred-weights, hoppers, and holds, no
starveling passions here, only the burden
of much, and more, draft
and ballast, deadweight tonnage,
love and hate and anger baffled,
no exaltation, no
epiphanies come of this, only
the crushing pressure, bite and chew
and swallow, the world come drowning in
on stuff, and stuff, and stuff.

Philip Appleman

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stage, a brief interlude, on a long journey. (He summarizes: "I wept I was caught downtown with white people. And left. As simple as that. Like one day you got pubic hairs.") At the end of his book, he thanks his second wife, to whom it is dedicated, for helping him come to consciousness about women's oppression and denounces male chauvinism and the careless womanizing of his youth—too late to help Hettie but not too late to help himself. But such ironies, like those Hettie Jones herself observes throughout her memoir, only underscore the important question aired in this cautionary, engrossing tale. □

Past Present

THOMAS MALLON

Men of Iron, by the novelist and illustrator Howard Pyle (1853-1911), belongs to that category of book known today as the young adult novel, as well as to that more exclusive class of books whose value lies almost totally in being reread rather than read. *Men of Iron* is listed as my favorite book in my 1963 sixth-grade autograph album (John Glenn was my "hero"), and I recently reread it, at a remove of twenty-seven years.

It is the story of Myles Falworth, an inexhaustibly gung-ho lad of the fifteenth century who is out to become a knight not only for the glory of it but also to avenge his blind father, who was once unfairly implicated in a plot against Henry IV and forced to live a much-reduced life in exile and danger. Myles is more than brash; he's "hungry for brawling." In fact, he's a hair-trigger jerk—but that's only on rereading. To Pyle in 1892, and no doubt to me in 1962, he was a noble fellow whose challenge to the not terribly villainous "bachelors" of the Earl of Mackworth's retinue is a triumph of gutsiness exceeded only by his later, climactic tilts with the Sieur de la Montaigne and the Earl of Alban.

The plot is actually quite complicated, but I'm sure I paid it little heed, rehearsing a lifetime ability to derive atmospheric pleasure from detective novels and spy movies whose stories I'm not terribly intent on following. Rereading Pyle also convinces me that my visual sense, at the age of 11, was as undeveloped as my sequential one: The illustrations to *Men of Iron*, done by the author himself—a man who ran an art school at Chadds Ford and taught Maxfield Parrish—evoke no memories at all. While I can't see how the book could have helped me to "grow," rereading it has a marvelous capacity for making me shrink. Back among schoolchildren in the wholesome cold war suburbs, I stand before myself "as a living child."

Pyle's fifteenth century was not, I realize, a fantasy realm into which I was eager to escape but a parallel universe in which I was guaranteed to find my way around. Before he is knighted Myles must make a vigil "in the chapel, watching his armor, thinking such wonderful thoughts, and dreaming such wonderful wide-eyed dreams." Back in 1962-63 I looked forward to preparation for confirmation as a matter of high seriousness and romance: getting an additional name, being made a soldier of God, being slapped by a bishop—all that not so different from being dubbed by a monarch. In colloquy with Prior Edward, Myles wrestles with the notion of a just war, something about which the good priests of the Rockville Centre diocese, living in the shadow of Cardinal Spellman, Vicar of the Armed Forces, could easily reassure one.

The fall of 1962 found me in a classroom with my first male teacher, after six years with gentle young women, most of whom would probably have gone to law school if they'd come of age a decade later. This first male was something of a martinet—a Korean War veteran, perhaps—and suddenly the happy world of class plays and show-and-tell began to resemble Parris Island. I had always been able to count on the chin-chucking love of the women, but now here was a man who dealt in respect and contempt. I made the cut into the realm of favorites by being an eager-to-please little whiz, just as the boys in *Men of Iron* struggle up the ranks from squire to bachelor to knight.

Like a Victorian theologian making typological connections between the Old and New Testaments, Pyle made sure his

Thomas Mallon's books include the novel Arts and Sciences *(Ticknor & Fields) and* Stolen Words: Forays into the Origins and Ravages of Plagiarism *(Ticknor & Fields). "Past Present" is an occasional column edited by Gwyneth Cravens.*

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pubescent reading public saw the links between their world and the medieval one he was re-creating: "No doubt it was as hard then as it is now for the mother to see the nestling thrust from the nest to shift for itself." This is not, however, to say that the author, who helped in the 1904 campaign of Teddy Roosevelt, didn't think there had been, since Myles's day, a falling off from the strenuous life: "Men's bodies in those days were tougher and more seasoned to hardships of weather than they are in these our times. Myles thought no more of the burning iron plates that incased him than a modern soldier thinks of his dress uniform in warm weather." I probably guessed that there had been a further falling off in the decades leading to my birth.

Pyle's set speeches tend to resemble those of the teacher or priest who wishes to be a sport but can never quite bring himself to proffer confidences without condescension. The chapter openings that generalize about a "boy's life" (the name of that most boring of magazines) have an obligatory, underimagined air, and his prose sometimes wears his research about as lightly as a suit of armor: "The huge cylindrical tilting helm was so constructed in front as to slope at an angle in all directions to one point. That point was the center of a cross formed by two iron bands welded to the steel-face plates of the helm where it was weakened by the opening slit of the occularium, or peephole." But I'm sure I knew how to skim, and probably leaped over such passages in just the way I'd learned to bound to the Philco, during commercials, for a Ring Ding. I would have considered the "good parts" to be not all the jousting and fighting at the pel but the small moments providing that new readerly pleasure, recognition. Already embarked on a sheepish lifetime of looking at my shoes in awestruck moments, I must have been reassured to find that during an interview with the formidable Earl of Mackworth, Myles—exactly the sort of person who would have passed me over in a choose-up—does just what I'd be doing: "Upon the ground at his feet were four pebbles, and he noticed how they almost made a square, and would do so if he pushed one of them with his toe, and then it seemed strange to him that he should think of such a little foolish thing at that dreadful time."

The smallness of such detail probably seemed to me a species of subtlety, a quality akin to another one rarely found in the books I'd read up to that time: moral ambiguity. Myles knows that the Earl of Mackworth has his own agenda, and that his own early preferment is something of a setup. Significantly, when he at last gets the chance to avenge his father, Myles can "not but confess in his own mind that the King had many rational, perhaps just, grounds for grievance against such an ardent opponent as the blind Lord had shown himself to be." My friends and I were all, I think, a bit guiltily ambivalent toward our own fathers. We knew that they'd been soldiers twenty years before. (We never played cowboys and Indians; it was still, in 1962, Americans and Jerries.) How did those fathers, who'd fought the real thing, become so diminished, get shrunk into white collars so they could ship out each morning in convoys of Long Island Rail Road cars? In some unacknowledged way this bothered us, and Myles's filial disloyalty, however mental and momentary, must have seemed intriguing.

I was a late bloomer, not much aware of any schoolboy eros, but the descriptions of Myles strike me now as less formulaic than ogling: He's "a bonny lad, with brown face, curling hair, a square, strong chin, and a pair of merry laughing blue eyes; his shoulders were broad; his chest was thick of girth; his muscles and thews were as tough as oak." Myles and Gascoyne walk with "their arms . . . wound across one another's shoulders, after the manner, as a certain great writer says, of boys and lovers." Gascoyne receives not only Myles's "love-gift" of a dagger but, more important to Pyle, his secrets: "I think that there is nothing so flattering to one's soul as to be made the confidant of a stronger nature."

When my crushes did come, they would in fact take this subservient form endorsed by the author; but I doubt I filed this passage for future reference, because the feature of Pyle's Americanized Merrie England that would have appealed to me most strongly is the importance of Making It. Pyle's critical biographer, Lucien L. Agosta, has not failed to notice the Horatio Algerism involved in Myles's rise, and anyone who reads *Men of Iron*—published in a year my sixth-grade brain would have remembered as that of Grover Cleveland's comeback—will recognize it, for all its touches of fortune, as a handbook for careerists. The right mixture of pluck and cheek will be rewarded. After hearing the Earl of Mackworth's plans for him, Myles tells Gascoyne "of the wonderful new life that had thus suddenly opened before him, with its golden future of limitless hopes, of dazzling possibilities, of heroic ambitions." I was still a kid, but so was the President, and his family had come from Ireland, too. □

ART.

ARTHUR C. DANTO

Monet

Monet's *Impression: Sunrise* of 1872 gave Impressionism its (originally abusive) name, as Monet himself gave the movement most of its defining attitudes, its archetypal vision and its heroic myth of the artist who overcomes immense personal difficulties and, in the face of the derisive resistance of critics, produces works so infused with joy in the visual surfaces of life that it is difficult to see why anyone would paint, or even greatly care to look at, pictures of any other kind. From about 1899 until his death in 1926, Monet devoted himself, obsessively and finally exclusively, to recording the transient appearances of his celebrated water garden at Giverny; and he enjoyed a second artistic coming in the 1950s, when the Abstract Expressionists recognized, in the vast scale of his waterlily paintings, in the near-abstractness of their interdissolving forms, in the dense inscription of painterly gestures and the urgent impasto of painted strokes, anticipations of their own expansive surfaces and depths, which were like those seen through watery lenses. Monet led an increasingly reclusive life at Giverny, sheltered by his ability to define his own environment from the powerful forces of modernism (the Fauves, Cubists and Surrealists), cultivating his own garden literally and figuratively. Thus he was able to carry, out of the imperatives of a nineteenth-century artistic movement, the evolved axioms of a mid-twentieth-century artistic movement as a kind of gift when the world was ready to receive it. In 1922 he had the uncharacteristic impulse to give, *sans recompense*, the immense cycle of waterlily images to the French nation. These are the works widely known from their reverent installation in the Orangerie. It must have come as a shock to the Parisian art world in 1926 to realize that Monet had just died, when there was every reason to suppose him long dead; and the waterlily tableaux must, then and for a quarter-century afterward, have seemed like the last flaring

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of a great style of painting impossible to imagine that anyone could still have been practicing—until after 1950, when it seemed as if the old Impressionist had been incredibly ahead of his time and had discovered the Expressionist vocabulary of scale, pigment, brushwork, surface and gesture before anyone else understood or accepted it.

There is something immensely moving in the image of Monet narrowing his world to the boundaries of his own garden and then, to the exclusion of anything else, endeavoring to capture its fugitive looks at different moments under different lights in different weathers, and so beneath different reflected skies; but in a sense he had prepared himself for this almost allegorical labor through the serial works of single motifs that he executed in the 1890s—of the facade of the cathedral of Rouen, or the poplar trees at Giverny, or the muffin-shaped stacks of grain in the fields behind his house—viewed, often but not always, from the same vantage point but in different atmospheres and even seasons. The serial works were conceived as such and exhibited as such, so that, ideally, part of one's experience of any single work belonging to the series was to have been informed by the knowledge that it was part of a wider exploration and a larger statement, like (to speak with a qualified anachronism) a frame from a filmstrip, understood as implying a trajectory of temporal representation and possessing, in addition to its own artistic merits, the aesthetics of a fragment, a glimpse, an aspect, an instant, a movement stopped and frozen. Such were the pressures of the market (and Monet's own canny merchandising impulses) that the separate panels were distributed among different collectors in various countries, and though it has become a piece of everyone's art-historical knowledge that these works in some sense belong together, it is rare that they are experienced together except in books, and nearly impossible that a given grainstack or poplar painting should be experienced with all or even most of the others with which it was originally conceived. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts has had the imagination and the enterprise to mount a show composed of all of Monet's series, bringing together for the first time in a century all, or almost all, the members. So we have the immense privilege not only of seeing, for example, a favorite grainstack painting with most of its peers but also of seeing the grainstack series together with all the other series Monet executed in this momentous decade. And we have, beyond this, what no one in the 1890s could have had: the knowledge of what was to come in the crowning serial works, the waterlily tableaux, to which Monet devoted the last twenty-five years of his life. This is one of the great, obligatory exhibitions.

It would be poetic but, I think, false to construe the various series of the 1890s as searches for a motif to which Monet could devote his life—as a sequence of relationships undertaken in the hope of finding an abiding relationship, with scenes and objects whose visual limitations were revealed after a time the way the emotional limits of one's partners are revealed, until one finds at last the single partner with whom a true marriage is possible, the person becoming, like the water garden for Monet, an entire world. This was the way it worked out with Monet (who even had an unsatisfying visual affair with Venice in the midst of his marriage to the garden at Giverny);

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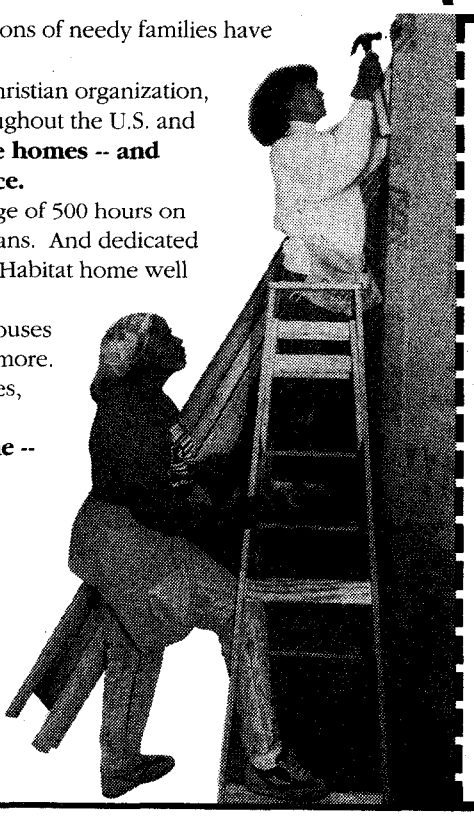

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but it was not, I think, *what* he was seeking, even though his serial adventures prepared him for the culminating commitment of his being. The deep historical question the exhibition raises is why Monet became a serial artist in the first place, and our answer to this has to become a factor in our understanding and appreciation of these protracted engagements with identical subjects over time. My sense is that he entered the decade with motivations very different from those with which he left it.

Indeed, I believe Monet left the 1880s with motivations very different from those which were to drive him in the 1890s. Visitors to "Monet in the '90s" would be well advised to arrive early enough to spend some time with Monet in the 1880s in the M.F.A.'s ample nineteenth-century galleries, under far less crowded viewing conditions. There are even, among the sparkling and ingratiating landscapes of the 1880s, some that address the very motifs Monet was to take up in the 1890s—the *Poplar Trees at Giverny* of 1887, for example, or *Fisherman's House at Varengeville* of 1882. The latter is especially interesting for the fact that the house really looks like something fishermen might have something to do with, whereas in the 1890s, the house all but dissolves into the landscape, like an outcropping of rock, leached of its human overtones and its connotations of warmth and shelter. There are no human presences to speak of in the paintings of the 1890s, except, perhaps, for the almost insectlike crawl of coaches and pedestrians, browned and blurred by fog, as they crowd Charing Cross Bridge in London in a series from late in the decade. But there are human presences within the paintings of the 1880s and, one might also say, outside those paintings as well, meant by their presence to give pleasure to those who viewed them. The M.F.A. has on permanent loan the wonderful *La Japonaise* of 1876, in which Monet depicts his wife, Camille, striking a geisha pose against a wall of fans, wearing a kimono embroidered, across her backside, with a fierce Japanese swordsman. It is full of bluff comedy, and reminds us that Monet started out to be a caricaturist. There is neither wit nor visual blandishment in the paintings of the 1890s, and certainly none in the first series to strike the eye upon crossing the threshold, which consists of a single, uncompromisingly dour view of a harsh and rock-strewn landscape in the valley of the Creuse.

In the first images of the Creuse we see the identical rise of land at various moments of the day—in sunlight, at sunset, at twilight and under gray skies. The brushstrokes are angry dabs that make no effort to fuse into forms, and the colors are almost poisonous, like the brutal green at river's edge in *Valley of the Creuse (Grey Day)*, which looks like industrial pollution. The Creuse series was executed and exhibited in 1889, and the disjunction between it and what Monet had been painting immediately before is so abrupt that one feels the idea of the serial work must be connected with the shift. It is so abrupt, indeed, that it seems to testify either to some profound personal change or to some equally profound artistic decision—or, as must be the case when art and life are so much of a piece, as they came to be in Monet's case, of both at once.

Paul Hayes Tucker, who curated this show and wrote the searching and illuminating catalogue, argues that Monet had been put under considerable pressure as an artist by the theories of Georges Seurat and their exemplification in *A Sunday on the Island of la Grande Jatte.* Seurat was young, brilliant and charismatic, and in the art world of Paris in the late 1880s, his invention, Pointillism, was perceived as a challenge to the premises of Impressionism, and in particular to Monet as the embodiment of Impressionist ideals. Pointillism was "scientific," grounded in the latest color theories: Tiny dabs of pure color were carefully juxtaposed on rational principles to achieve predictable optical effects, and thus contrasted completely with Impressionism's entire address to the world, which was, well, *impressionistic,* which meant to set down, without benefit of any special theory, the way nature presented itself to the collaborative artistic eye. In many ways, the Paris art world of the 1880s was like the New York art world of the 1980s—competitive, aggressive, swept by the demand that artists come up with something new or perish. The difference was that a kind of pluralism had settled upon New York in the 1980s, whereas the modernist intolerances of the "incorrect" way to paint had already begun with Seurat. Pissarro, for example, defected from Impressionism and began to follow the new color theories of Divisionism, according to which pigments were not to be mixed but placed "pure" against one another to achieve an effect of great luminosity and vibrancy. (Divisionism put into effect the color theories of the American scientist Ogden Rood, a professor at Columbia University.) In a sense, Divisionism interacted with Impressionist views on color and touch somewhat parallel to the way in which Lavoisier's theory of combustion interacted with Priestley's theory of phlogiston. And just as one could continue to believe in the existence of phlogiston by making adjustments here and there in the theory, so one could continue to be avant-garde and Impressionist—but only by making suitable changes in the way one painted.

The difference between the sorts of narrative lived by artists in Paris in the 1880s and in New York in the 1980s was this: History was defined as progressive in the first but merely successive in the second. In the 1980s, artists bent on getting attention had to come up with something new, whereas in the 1880s the demand was less for novelty than for advance. Impressionism was redeemable only if it could meet the scientific challenge of Pointillism by showing itself to be just as "scientific." And that, in my view, is at least part of what the series paintings undertook to do.

Eighteen-eighty-nine was a most important year for France, being the centennial of the Revolution, and the country marked the anniversary with the ambitious Exposition Universel, the chief remaining souvenir of which is the Eiffel Tower. The Exposition was meant to celebrate progress, scientific and political, and the tower itself was its metaphor, an emblem of "the immortal law of progress." Visitors saw the very latest in machinery and engineering and, given the immense and palpable prestige of science at that moment, it is hardly a matter of surprise that an artist anxious to be taken seriously by those expected to visit Paris would claim science as the principle of his art. When Monet exhibited that year with Rodin, the catalogue essay by his friend Octave Mirbeau sought to establish Monet's scientific credentials: The paintings make visible "living nature . . . with its cosmic mechanisms and . . . laws of planetary motion." Across the Champ de Mars from the Exposition, Gauguin showed work in the Café Volpini which, as different from the academic painting given prominence in the Palais des Beaux-Arts as was Monet's, shown in the rue de Sèze across the river, also boasted of transmitting intellectual values of the highest order. Every advanced painter in Paris was retreating from mere aesthetics in favor of something rational, intellectually respectable, a logical step for-

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ward in the conquest of appearances. Those are the deep historical reasons Impressionism had to change or perish.

Now, it is my sense that the concept of serial painting was Monet's response to the charge that he produce a body of work at once Impressionistic and scientific. "I felt it would not be trivial to study a single motif at different hours of the day," Monet is reported to have said, "and to note the effects of light which, from one hour to the next, modified so noticeably the appearance and the coloring of a building." Monet may have had this idea before 1889, when he painted the valley of the Creuse, but it had become urgent, by that date, that he embark on some sort of observation in order to cast his natural painterly idiom into a scientific mode. The philosophy of science has come a long way since the time it was supposed that science was simple generalization drawn from careful observation, but this empiricist view certainly dominated philosophical views of science in the 1890s, and indeed it defined the basic tenets of logical positivism well into the 1950s in its analysis of scientific discourse. Monet would have had every reason to think of himself as behaving scientifically in noting "the effects of light . . . on color and appearance." The Creuse series is devoid of almost any interest except this. The scene is barren and the painting ugly, as if declaring its sole motivation to be observational truth. These paintings have the appearance of having been transmitted from some remote meteorological outpost to which the painter had been sent on a scientific expedition to gather visual data for the enhancement of human knowledge.

Unlike Degas, Monet did not, so far as I know, centrally rely on photographs, and it is difficult, given the effects he was chasing, to see how he could have. But it is possible to wonder if the idea of the moving picture, widely discussed in French art circles through the famous images of the movement of men and animals by Muybridge, did not suggest the strategy of distinct frames as a way of stopping the movement of light across a surface. Monet's method was singularly unwieldy (but so, after all, was Muybridge's, who used banks of cameras successively tripped). Monet worked on several canvases at once, and only someone with his enormous physical energy and programmatic ambition would have been capable of plein-air painting in which canvases were lifted on and off the easel as the atmosphere changed. (Why did

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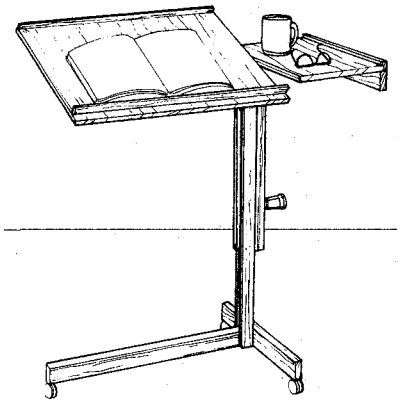

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he not use banks of easels, exactly like Muybridge?) He would work on as many as fourteen or fifteen canvases at once. So variable was the climate in London that, Tucker tells us, "by nine o'clock in the morning he could already have worked on five canvases; by noon fifteen." It was as though he enacted in himself the mechanism of the motion-picture camera, spatializing time, as Bergson might say, since all the changes would in effect be displayed simultaneously. Something like thirty of the grainstack paintings have survived; and though these were painted in different seasons as well as at different times of day, Monet claimed, of this series in particular but by implication of all the others, that the individual pictures "only acquire their value by the comparison and succession of the entire series." So the experience should be like having spread before one the consecutive linked records of "the effect of light on appearance and color" of these powerful forms. Tucker contends that grainstacks have a special meaning for the French, who sentimentalize rural life and countryside. And perhaps that does enter into the explanation of why Monet selected them as motifs. But that cannot be the explanation of the serial nature of these works, which is after all the dominant artistic property of the grainstack paintings taken as a single work with some thirty modules.

The idea of seriality underwent its own changes in the course of a long and productive decade. Seurat died in 1891, taking away part of the pressure, and the imperative to be scientific itself weakened as French artistic individuals sought another ideal. (The wider social determinants of this change are brilliantly narrated by Debora L. Silverman in her *Art Nouveau in Fin de Siècle France: Politics, Psychology, and Style*, University of California Press.) Decorativity, for one thing, became a general ambition for art: The waterlily paintings are explicitly designated "decorations," and refer to the wall and the shape of the room they're in as much as to the pond itself. The poplar series, with its rhythms and graces, as if a metaphor for a chorus of dancers, exhibits, beyond the registered changes in light, remarkable shifts in parallax, some very exciting croppings and a self-conscious audacity of composition. And though there is very little variation in perspective in the Rouen facade series, this may be due to the exigencies of location and the need to remain at a fairly fixed viewing point. There is a sense in which the densely ornamented cathedral facade made demands of a special kind on Monet's draftsmanship, regimenting the brush, inhibiting the fallback to reflexes he had developed over the decades of rendering leaves and grasses, clouds and sun splashes, wind-tossed treetops, flowing water, flower-strewn fields.

I have tried to write an essay in what Michael Baxandall has termed "inferential art criticism"—inferring to the best explanation of seriality, construed as a response to the art world of a century ago. Of course there is more to the show than this. It is a demanding exhibition but a rewarding one, a tour de force, really, appropriate to its astonishing contents. If you don't like this explanation, you must find your own. You cannot, I think, escape the question. (The show closes in Boston on April 29, after which it travels to the Art Institute of Chicago, from May 19 through August 12, and then to the Royal Academy in London, from September 7 through December 9.) □

LETTERS.

(*Continued From Page 402*)

is the beginning of that elusive thing called freedom? In Europe, the crowds stand and frequently cheer; in South Africa, surging hundreds of thousands spontaneously *dance*.

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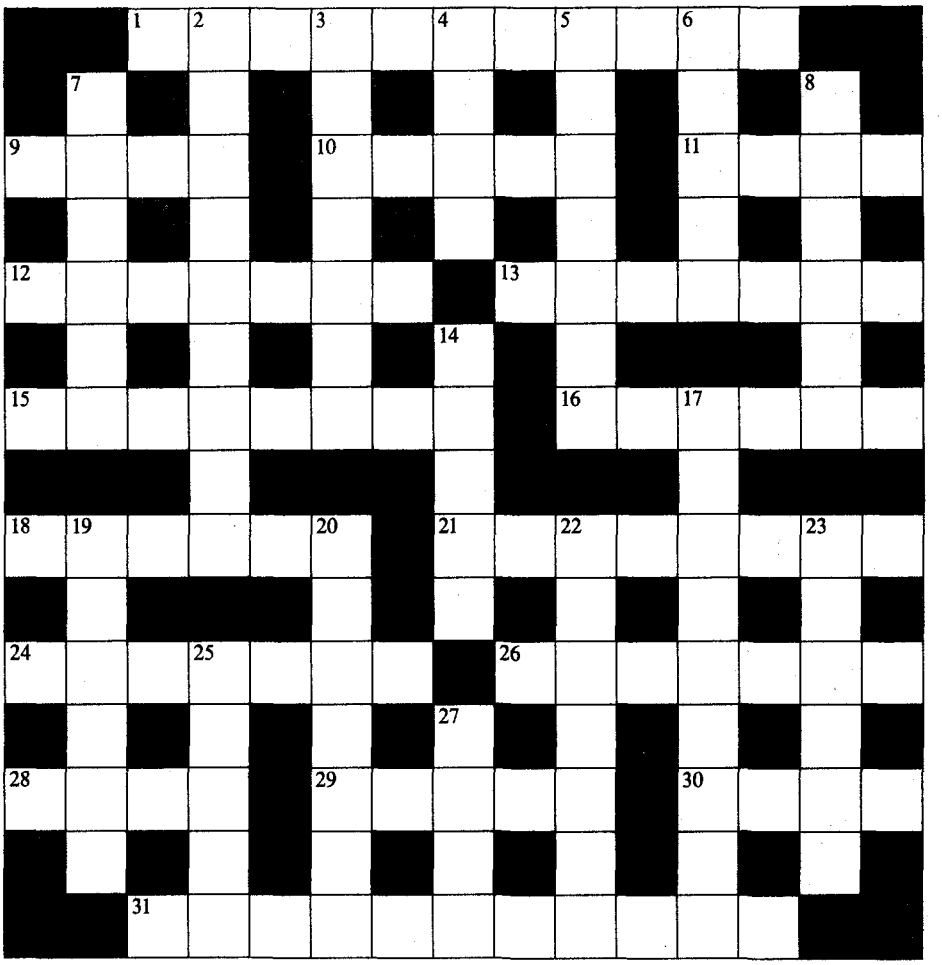
SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2281

B	E	A	R	S	W	I	T	N	E	S	S			
	A		O		A		R		S		T		F	
A	T	L	O	N	G	L	A	S	T		A	D	A	M
	O		M		O		V		U		T		M	
I	N	T	E	R	N	E	E		A	L	I	B	I	S
	E		R				L		R		O		L	
	S	U	S	I	E		S	P	I	N	N	E	Y	S
	H				L				E				S	
F	E	A	T	H	E	R	S		S	L	A	C	K	
	A		H		C		W				M		E	
A	D	V	E	N	T		I	S	A	B	E	L	L	A
	O		C		O		F		Q		R		E	
A	F	A	R		R	I	T	U	A	L	I	S	T	S
	F		A		A		L		B		N		O	
			B	E	L	L	Y	L	A	N	D	I	N	G

Crossword Puzzle No. 2282

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 The bothersome things about a limp's occurrence have probably been covered by numerous writers. (11)
9 and 11 A fake diamond, as some say, might appear rather green. (8)
10 Formal body, commonly? (5)
11 See 9 across
12 Great country—keep it in mind, perhaps! (7)
13 Did she have a bad time in the classic arts, hunting the possible association? (7)
15 A sort of riveter has a point, but that's what some dogs are supposed to do! (8)
16 and 14 down What a horrible way to end the game! (6,5)
18 You might find us sleeping, in a way, being "beat." (6)
21 What makes the animal finally twist and turn, that also might speed you along? (8)
24 Announce a strike instead of something one might walk on? (Sounds like you might oversleep if you do!) (7)
26 Keeping the records on part of the lumber industry? (7)
28 and 7 down Flirt with an old athlete and founder, in quite a state! (10)
29 See 8 down
30 Is this article free, but lifeless? (4)
31 One's holdings might be 9 across, being not completely and properly suited. (4-7)

DOWN

2 Get your gun at what might be sure trouble—they could offer model support! (9)
3 Rouse latent ideals in high church position? (7)
4 Father, as some say, isn't out of trouble with any body! (4)
5 You'll find small salamanders are around for such exertions. (7)
6 Sounds like a wrongful act, making such a rich cake! (5)
7 See 28 across
8 and 29 across The very busy human sound that implies the subject is performing. (6,5)
14 See 16 across
17 Go from C to D, perhaps, to minimize the importance of things. (9)
19 Contributes to other than first-class circular roads in Britain. (6)
20 Bambi possibly took 54 to heart, being a singular form of 19. (7)
22 A unique type in the tax office, though business might be pressing with them. (7)
23 A sister labor body in service of the church? (6)
25 *Does it mean I believe in a little color, a little* firm around the edges? (5)
27 What one might do with the phone, when laid up? (4)

PUZZLED?

No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules," send for those of Mr. Lewis to *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

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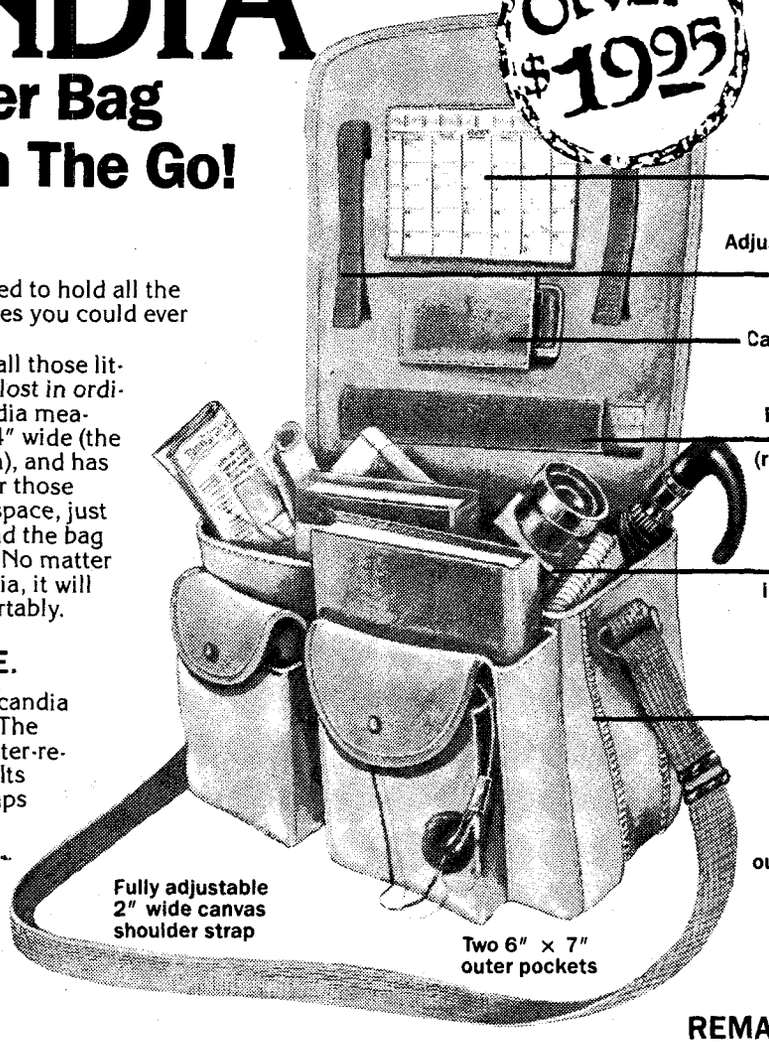
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